NATION

Children must have access to sex education: SC

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BUSINESS

Markets rebound amid buying in Reliance, IT firms

≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS

India eye early finish against struggling WI

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

ساڈھ روزنامہ بنگلور

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Telangana HC stays govt order on 42% quota for BCs

HYDERABAD, 9 OCT

The Telangana High Court on Thursday issued an interim order staying a Government Order providing 42 per cent reservation to the Backward Classes in local bodies. With the stay order, the upcoming elections for Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) seats and Panchayats are likely to come to a halt. A division bench comprising Chief Justice Aparesh Kumar Singh and Justice GM Mohiuddin, which heard a batch of petitions challenging the state government's order that increased the BC quota, directed the government to file reply in four weeks. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Over 100 FIRs filed against posts on Gavai

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

In the wake of a shoe being hurled at Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai in court, Punjab Police have registered multiple FIRs against over 100 social media users for casteist and inflammatory posts. The posts allegedly provoked violence, insulted a Scheduled Caste (SC) member, and incited enmity. The accused advocate, 71-year-old Rakesh Kishore, shocked the court on October 6. CJI Gavai, calling it a "forgotten chapter", resumed hearings calmly. However, Justice Ujjal Bhuyan called the act "an affront to the Supreme Court", while Solicitor General Tushar Mehta termed it "unpardonable". Senior advocate Kapil Sibal urged the court to move on. *—PTI*

No age bar if surrogacy started before 2022: SC

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

In a key ruling, the Supreme Court held that age restrictions under the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, do not apply to couples who began surrogacy procedures before the law took effect on January 25, 2022.
The bench ruled that Section 4(iii)(c)(I) of the Act has no retrospective effect. Couples who had created and frozen embryos before the cut-off date cannot be denied surrogacy rights due to the later age bar. The court said surrogacy, part of reproductive autonomy under Article 21, cannot be retrospectively restricted without clear legislative intent. It rejected the Centre's argument that age limits should apply retrospectively in the child's interest, noting natural conception has no such bar.*—PTI*

K'taka approves 12 days of menstrual leave in a year

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

In a landmark move, Karnataka has become the first Indian state to grant all working women, across government and private sectors, 12 days of paid menstrual leave annually. The Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, approved the proposal on Thursday.

State Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil announced that the one-day-per-month leave will apply to women working in diverse sectors, including garment factories, multinational corporations, IT firms, and government offices.

"The decision was taken keeping in mind the health and well-being of working women and to encourage a more inclusive and supportive work environment," the Cabinet note stated. It also aims to raise awareness around menstrual health and promote physical and mental comfort for female employees.

The policy marks a significant step towards gender-sensitive workplace reform and inclusivity, as Karnataka becomes the first state to implement such a measure across all employment sectors.

This move builds on a growing national trend. Kerala recently introduced two days of menstrual leave per month for female trainees in Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs). Bihar and Odisha offer 12 days annually, but only for women in government service. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Israel, Hamas agree on '1st phase' of Gaza ceasefire

After 2 yrs of war, hostages & prisoners will be exchanged

CAIRO, 8 OCT

Israel and Hamas have agreed to a ceasefire in their two-year war, paving the way for the release of remaining hostages held in Gaza in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

The breakthrough, brokered in Egypt, has been welcomed with relief but also caution, amid ongoing uncertainty about key elements of a broader peace plan proposed by US President Donald Trump.

Key issues, such as Hamas's disarmament and the future governance of Gaza, remain unresolved. However, both sides now appear closer than ever to ending a conflict that has killed tens of thousands of Palestinians, devastated Gaza, and sparked global protests.

Despite the expected signing of the deal later today, Israeli airstrikes continued Thursday, with explosions reported in northern Gaza. An Israeli military official, speaking anonymously, said operations were targeting threats to troops as they reposition.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to convene his Security Cabinet on Thursday evening to approve the deal. The full Knesset will then vote on the release of Palestinian prisoners. Far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich expressed "mixed emotions" over the agreement, having opposed previous ceasefire deals.

Hamas has urged President Trump and international mediators to ensure Israel abides by its commitments, including troop withdrawals, entry of aid into Gaza, and the prisoner exchange, without delay.

According to two Egyptian officials and a Hamas representative, the agreement includes a prisoner list and maps marking Israeli withdrawal zones for the first phase of pullback. Victims of those being released have 24 hours to lodge objections after the list is published.

The withdrawal could begin as early as Thursday evening. Hostage and prisoner exchanges are expected to start Monday, although some sources suggest they could begin by Sunday night. This will be the third ceasefire since the war began on 7 October 2023. The last ceasefire ended in March after Israel resumed airstrikes. Of the 48 hostages still held in Gaza, around 20 are believed to be alive. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 5 & 6

sraeli soldiers work on a tank near the Israeli-Gaza border, as seen from southern Israel on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

In call with Trump, PM hails ceasefire

New Delhi, 9 Oct

India has welcomed the US-brokered Israel-Hamas peace deal, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi praising Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu's "strong leadership" and expressing hope it will bring lasting peace to Gaza. Modi also spoke with US President Donald Trump, congratulating him on the "historic Gaza peace plan" and reviewing trade negotiations. However, the Congress party criticised Modi's "unqualified praise" for Netanyahu, calling it "shocking and morally atrocious." Congress leader Jairam Ramesh accused Modi of ignoring Israel's settlement expansion and staying silent on Palestine's future.expansion and remaining silent on Palestine's future.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his British counterpart Keir Starmer at the Global Fintech Fest 2025, in Mumbai.

India and UK sign £350M defence pact

NEW DELHI/MUMBAI

India and the UK have signed a £350 million ($468 million) agreement under which the Indian Army will receive UK-made lightweight multirole missile (LMM) systems, aimed at bolstering India's air defence capabilities.

The deal, announced during British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's official visit to India, will also create over 700 jobs in Northern Ireland, the UK Ministry of Defence confirmed.

In wide-ranging talks, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Starmer focused on strengthening cooperation in trade, defence, technology, and critical minerals. The leaders announced plans to finalise an inter-governmental agreement on developing maritime electric propulsion systems for Indian naval platforms. They also agreed to enhance long-term collaboration on complex weapons systems, with IAF instructors to be integrated with the UK's Royal Air Force.

Both sides unveiled initiatives in artificial intelligence, telecom, health, and education. A satellite campus for critical minerals cooperation will be set up at the Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad.

Modi raised concerns about pro-Khalistani activities in the UK, stressing that violent extremism must not misuse freedom of expression. The two leaders also discussed geopolitical issues, including the wars in Ukraine and emphasised the need for peace, Indo-Pacific stability. Starmer described the upcoming UK-India Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement as a "breakthrough moment" that would slash tariffs, boost market access, and create jobs. In defence, both countries will establish Regional Maritime Security Centre of Excellence. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3 & 7

China asks India not to re-export rare earth minerals to US

BEIJING/ NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

China has reportedly asked India to provide guarantees that heavy rare earth magnets imported from China will not be re-exported to the United States. The request, aimed at preventing diversion of these critical components used in electric vehicles and defence, has contributed to ongoing delays in shipments.

According to The Economic Times, Indian companies have submitted end-user certificates stating that the magnets will not be used in weapons of mass destruction. However, China is demanding further export control assurances, similar to those under the Wassenaar Arrangement. India is a signatory to the arrangement; China is not.

Beijing, which controls 90 per cent of global production of heavy rare earth magnets, has recently halted the release of country-specific export data. de tensions with the US.

On Thursday, China imposed new restrictions on exports of rare earths and related technologies. The updated regulations require foreign firms to obtain special approval to export any product containing Chinese-sourced rare earth elements. Separately, China confirmed the resumption of direct flights with India by late October after a five-year pause. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Coldrif syrup's pharma owner arrested in TN

CHENNAI/NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The owner of Tamil Nadu-based Sresen Pharma, G Ranganathan, was arrested in Chennai in the early hours of Thursday by Madhya Pradesh police with local police support, in connection with the adulterated cough syrup case linked to multiple child deaths across states.

His company's product, 'Coldrif', is among three syrups, alongside RespifreshTR and ReLife, recalled by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO). None were exported, CDSCO informed the WHO, which is closely monitoring the case amid reports of acute renal failure and encephalitis in children in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian said two senior drug inspectors have been suspended for failing to inspect Sresen Pharma for over two years. The CDSCO has launched a nationwide inspection drive of cough syrup manufacturers and urged states to audit all producers. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

SC opens door for junior judges to become dist judges

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court has ruled that judicial officers with seven years' prior experience as advocates are eligible for appointment as district judges under the Bar quota. The Constitution Bench, led by Chief Justice BR Gavai and comprising Justices MM Sundresh, Aravind Kumar, Satish Chandra Sharma, and K Vinod Chandran, held that such officers cannot be barred from direct recruitment, overturning its 2020 Dheeraj Mor decision.

The Court clarified that eligibility must be assessed at the time of application. Judicial officers with a combined seven years of experience as judges and lawyers also qualify. The minimum age for applicants is 35 years. Only advocates, government pleaders, public prosecutors, or judicial officers with continuous relevant experience are eligible for Bar quota appointments.

The judgment emphasised that judicial officers acquire substantial expertise and undergo rigorous training, making them competent to compete with practising advocates. Restricting their participation would be unfair, depriving meritorious officers of the opportu-n i t y to compete and undermining the efficiency of the district judi-c i a r y. *—PTI*

Hungary's Krasznahorkai wins Nobel for Literature

STOCKHOLM, 9 OCT

Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai has won the 2025 Nobel Prize in Literature for his "compelling and visionary oeuvre that, in the midst of apocalyptic terror, reaffirms the power of art."

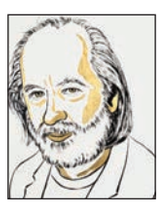
Known for his dense, philosophical novels, often written in single, sprawling sentences, Krasznahorkai, 71, has long been celebrated in literary circles. His notable works include 'Satantango', 'The Melancholy of Resistance', and 'Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming', many of which were adapted into films by director Béla Tarr.

The Nobel committee praised his "artistic gaze free of illusion," comparing him to Kafka and Thomas Bernhard. Committee member Steve Sem-Sandberg hailed his "half a century of pure excellence."

Born in Gyula, Hungary, Krasznahorkai studied law before turning to literature. He has travelled extensively and drawn inspiration from Asia, notably in works like 'A Mountain to the North', 'a Lake to the South...'

A critic of Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, he nonetheless received congratulations from the leader, who called him "the pride of Hungary."

Past honours include the 2015 Man Booker International Prize and the 2019 US National Book Award for Translated Literature. He is the first Hungarian Nobel laureate in literature since Imre Kertész (2002). The Nobel comes with USD 1.2 million, a gold medal and diploma. *—PTI*



Congress finalises seats in Bihar; Jan Suraaj releases 1st list

PATNA, 9 OCT

Bihar Congress pPresident Rajesh Kumar announced on Thursday that the party has finalised its seat-sharing arrangement and candidate list for the upcoming assembly elections, with approval from alliance partners in the INDIA bloc. A formal announcement is expected within two days.

The alliance includes RJD, three Left parties, VIP, and is likely to bring in JMM and RLJP. The Congress, which contested 70 seats in 2020 and won 19, may sacrifice some this time to accommodate new allies. Meanwhile, Jan Suraaj Party released its first list of 51 candidates. Notable names include Bhojpuri singer Ritesh Ranjan Pandey and third-gender candidate Pritti Kinnar (Bhorey). *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

THE DELHI CONUNDRUM

'Toxic air leads to rheumatoid arthritis'

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Air pollution, particularly PM2.5, may be fuelling a worrying rise in rheumatoid arthritis (RA) cases across Delhi-NCR, experts warned at the 40th annual Indian Rheumatology Association Conference (IRACON 2025).

RA is a chronic autoimmune disorder that causes joint pain, swelling, and disability. Traditionally linked to genetics, it is now increasingly associated with environmental triggers, notably air pollution. Delhi, among the world's most polluted cities, has become a key concern.

"RA is appearing in patients with no genetic predisposition but long-term exposure to polluted air," said Dr Uma Kumar of AIIMS. Pollutants trigger systemic inflammation and oxidative stress, fuelling immune overactivity and disease progression, she added.

Dr Bimlesh Dhar Pandey (Fortis, Noida) linked RA to PM2.5, nitrogen oxides, and ozone exposure, especially in those living near busy roads. A European Medical Journal study (2025) confirmed a causal connection between pollution and autoimmune disease using genetic modelling.

Dr Neeraj Jain of Sir Ganga Ram Hospital warned that pollution is "rewriting the RA narrative," with even the young now at risk. Experts also noted rising severity in cases due to reduced urban green spaces.

RA affects about 1 per cent of India's adult population, but the numbers may spike as pollution worsens. Doctors called for urgent policy action, stricter air quality norms, green and cover expansion. *—PTI*

Seven-year-old boy dies in Kodagu school fire

KODAGU, 9 OCT

A seven-year-old student died after a fire broke out early on Thursday at a residential school in Karnataka's Kodagu district. The blaze, suspected to have been caused by a short circuit, erupted at the Har Mandir School in Madikeri, where several children were asleep in the hostel. The victim, identified as Pushpak, a Class II student from Chettimani village, was among 30 students staying at the school. Firefighters and local residents acted swiftly to control the flames, managing to rescue the remaining 29 pupils safely. Senior police officers and Fire Brigade personnel visited the site to inspect the damage and assess safety measures. Authorities said an investigation is underway to confirm the exact cause, though preliminary findings indicate an electrical short circuit. —*PTI*

Cabinet approves Labour Welfare Bill

Cabinet gives nod to development projects; CM's dinner party causes buzz about reshuffle

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

The State Cabinet on Thursday approved several major schemes and projects.

It cleared the Karnataka Labour Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which enhances financial assistance under six existing labour welfare schemes, including educational incentives for organised workers and their dependents.

It also sanctioned the purchase of an Aerial Ladder Platform Vehicle capable of reaching 52-54m for the Fire and Emergency Services Department at an estimated cost of Rs 16 crore to strengthen disaster response capabilities in high-rise buildings.

The Cabinet also approved the first phase of an eco-tourism and cultural development project at the Devikarani Estate in Tataguni, Bengaluru district, at cost of Rs 55.33 crore.

CM DINNER PARTY

Political corridors were abuzz with a speculation of a major Cabinet reshuffle as Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is set to host a dinner party for Cabinet colleagues on 13 Oct.

The speculation comes as MLAs bat for Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar to take over as the State's CM.

Speaking to reporters at his Sadashivanagar residence, Shivakumar said, "I will not talk about it."

However, Madhugiri MLA K N Rajanna, who was sacked from the cabinet in August, had earlier hinted at a change of guard. "Let the Bihar assembly elections get over."

—*Salar News with agencies*

WHAT DID THE CABINET APPROVE?

WELFARE

Indira Food Kits: Antyodaya and Aaditya ration card holders will get grams, cooking oil, sugar & salt.

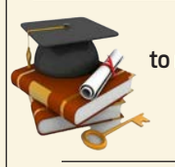
CYBER

Rs 38 cr to strengthen Karnataka State Data Centre's cyber security.

EDUCATION

Rs 405 cr for 11 residential schools.

Rs 550 cr to start an autonomous Kanakapura Medical College and a 300-bed teaching hospital.



Rs 70 cr to renovate the Polytechnic Institute at Mysuru.

Rs 50 cr to renovate the Polytechnic Institute at Chintamani.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Rs 1,000 cr for construction of major bridges.

Rs 1,000 cr for reconstruction of flood-damaged bridges and new footbridges in the Malnad and Coastal regions.

Rs 90 cr for 15 projects water projects in 15 taluks covering 39,413 hectares.

PLANNING

Aurad Town Panchayat in Bidar district will be made a municipality.

PHOTO: X

ED seizes Rs 50cr worth of gold in raids on Cong MLA

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday said it has seized about 40kg of gold worth Rs 50.33 crore during fresh searches in an online betting case that allegedly involves arrested Karnataka Congress MLA KC Veerendra and some others. The 24-carat gold bullion was recovered from two lockers located in Challakere in Karnataka's Chitradurga district, it said in a statement. The ED had arrested the 50-year-old legislator from the Chitradurga Assembly seat in August. He was held in Sikkim. It is alleged that Veerendra, in association with other friends and family members, was involved in operations of several "illegal" online betting websites like 'King567' and 'Raja567', among others and "cheated" innocent people.—*PTI*

Govt bats to protect groundwater

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his Deputy DK Shivakumar and Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology NS Boseraju launched the 'Neeriddare Nale' (water is future) project, which aims at reviving natural and traditional water sources and improving groundwater levels.

Boseraju said the State will give special priority to increasing groundwater levels by clearing encroachments on 41,849 lakes and filling them with water by December.

Siddaramaiah noted the dire shortage of groundwater in the State, while pushing for his government's schemes.

"Excluding 144 taluks, there is a shortage of groundwater in the remaining taluks," he said on Thursday at Vidhana Soudha. "For this reason, the KC Valley project to fill lakes in Kolar and Chikkaballapur was implemented. As a result, groundwater has now increased. But there are people who oppose even this."

He underscored the importance of groundwater.

"Groundwater is being used through 3.7 million borewells in the State... There are reports that usage is 8 per cent higher than the national average," he said. The State has been facing drought every four to five years, he mulled.

Shivakumar, who also holds the water portfolio spoke about inter-State disputes.

He said Karnataka has not been able to utilise its share of water owing to the disputes.

"I am not satisfied with the progress of irrigation projects," he said, pointing to the Krishna, Cauvery, Tungabhadra, and Mahadayi river water disputes.

The first phase of 'Neeriddare Nale' will cover 525 groundwater-stressed gram panchayats across 16 districts, including in over 100 taluks in the Kalyana Karnataka region, Boseraju said. —*Salar News*

Law Minister HK Patil, CM Siddaramaiah, DyCM DK Shivakumar, Minor Irrigation, Science and Technology NS Boseraju & others flag off the Neeriddare Nale scheme PHOTO: X@DKSHIVAKUMAR

Court directs Lokayukta to complete MUDA probe in two months

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

A sessions court in City rejected an application filed by activist and complainant Snehamayi Krishna seeking a change of Investigating Officer in the MUDA case against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

The petitioner had requested that the Bengaluru Additional City Civil and Sessions Court directs the Karnataka Lokayukta to appoint a different officer to handle the investigation.

However, the court on Thursday declined the request and instead directed the Lokayukta to complete the ongoing investigation "as expeditiously as possible" and within a maximum period of two months.

The order specifically stated that no further extension of time would be granted for filing the comprehensive report.

The final report will be furnished on 15 November, when the matter will be heard next.

In the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) case, it is alleged that compensatory sites were allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife in an upmarket area in Mysuru, which had higher property value as compared to the location of her land which had been "acquired" by the MUDA.

The MUDA had allotted plots to Parvathi under a 50:50 ratio scheme in lieu of 3.16 acres of her land, where it developed a residential layout. —*PTI*

- A sessions court, while declining a plea to change the Lokayukta Investigating Officer, ordered that the probe be expedited. It said the final report should be submitted by 15 Nov

'Govt not following 60% Kannada signboard rule'

BELAGAVI, 9 OCT

Kannada organisations accused the State government and Belagavi City Corporation of failing to implement their directive mandating that at least 60 per cent of text on any public signboards should be in Kannada.

The activists, who gathered at Rani Chennamma circle in Belagavi, alleged that even signboards on government offices and civic buildings under the city corporation's jurisdiction do not comply with the language order.

Activists pointed out that while traders and shopkeepers have largely complied with the directive by giving prominence to Kannada on their boards, the same cannot be said for signages maintained by the corporation.

They cited examples of non-compliance in street names, locality markers, parks, junctions, government office boards, municipal housing complexes, and railway overpass signboards.

"It is ironic that the government itself is violating the rule it has imposed," said Srinivas Talukar, founder-President of Sarvodaya Seva Sangha.

Carrying photographs of the signboards that allegedly has insufficient Kannada, demonstrators marched from Chennamma Circle to the Deputy Commissioner's office.

The protest was organised by the Sarvodaya Seva Sangha, a pro-Kannada organisation, which submitted a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner urging authorities to ensure strict implementation of the rule. —*Salar News*

WEDDING SHOOTS AT SOUDHA

Newlywed couples often do wedding shoots in the morning in front the State's Secretariat. While this can cause traffic jams in front of Vidhana Soudha, the giddy couples remain oblivious, as their laughter throws light on the City's congestion PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD

Six boys held for stripping, beating minor in City

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

Six boys have been apprehended after a video surfaced online showing them stripping and assaulting another minor while forcing him to consume a narcotic substance, police said Thursday.

The incident came to light when Govindarajanagar police's social media monitoring unit found the video online on 4 October. Police traced the victim on 5 October.

"He revealed that five to six months ago, a few boys had locked him in a room, forced him to smoke a cigarette laced with a banned drug, and assaulted him," police said. Police traced and questioned six juveniles, one of whom confessed the incident occurred on the terrace of his house. —*PTI*

CRIME BEAT

Girl's nude body found in front of Mysuru Palace

MYSURU, 9 OCT

A 10-year old girl was found murdered in front of Mysuru Palace, two days after a man was murdered by a gang at the same place.

The family of the victim, who had woken up due to heavy rain, was shocked to find their daughter missing from their shed during the wee hours of Thursday. They later found her body unclothed in an open drain in front of the Mysuru Palace, 50 meters away from their shed. The family suspects that the girl was raped and murdered.

With the help of nearby CCTVs, police identified the accused, Karthik, 38, a resident of Siddalingapura of Mysuru taluk. According to police, he was a habitual offender and was recently released from jail after a two-year imprisonment.

- The girl was found naked in an open drain in front of Mysuru Palace

At the time of the incident the accused was allegedly wandering in an intoxicated state.

The family had come from Kalaburgi district to sell toys and was camping in Doddakere grounds near the Dasara wrestling grounds. Nearly 50 families from the Kalaburgi district, selling toys and balloons, have been camping in various locations of Mysuru for the 15 days. —*Salar News*

Illegal mining: Ex-IAS Rao made recovery officer

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

The State government has appointed retired IAS officer GV Krishna Rao, former additional chief secretary, as Recovery Commissioner to seize and forfeit properties derived from illegal mining activities, a government order said.

The appointment was made under The Karnataka Appointment of Recovery Commissioners for Seizure and Confiscation of Property Arising from Illegal Mining and Proceeds of Crime Act, 2025, it added.

According to a notification issued by the Commerce and Industries Department (Mines), the Act empowers the state to appoint a Recovery Commissioner of not below Additional Chief Secretary rank, serving or retired, to oversee confiscation and attachment of properties obtained through illegal mining and related crimes. —*PTI*

'BBK12 IS HERE TO STAY'

DKS gets 'Bigg Boss' studio reopened

RAMANAGARA, 9 OCT

The Bengaluru South district authorities removed the seal on Vels Studios and Entertainment Pvt Ltd hosting Bigg Boss Kannada (BBK) edition in the wee hours of Thursday following Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's intervention.

The studio was sealed on Tuesday for violating environment norms.

Then, on Wednesday, Shivakumar wrote on X "I have directed the Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru South District to lift the seal on Jollywood premises in Bidadi, where Bigg Boss Kannada is being filmed." Shivakumar said in a post on 'X' on late Wednesday night.

Seeking to put an end to the uncertainty over the fate of the ongoing edition of Bigg Boss Kannada, he clarified: "While environmental compliance remains a top priority, the studio will be given time to address violations in accordance with the norms set by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board. I remain committed to supporting the Kannada entertainment industry, while also upholding our responsibility toward environmental protection."

According to sources, district officials along with Karnataka State Pollution Control Board officials and a posse of policemen reached the studio at about 3am on Thursday and opened it.

Actor Kichcha Sudeepa, who is anchoring the BBK, thanked Shivakumar.

"BBK12 is here to stay," the 'Eega' fame actor said on X.

The closure of the studio had put a big question mark over the fate of the ongoing season of 'Bigg Boss Kannada'. After the closure, all the participants were forced to move out of it. The organisers had shifted them all to a private resort in Bidadi in Bengaluru South district. —*PTI*

'Bigg Boss Kannada' host and actor Sudeep PHOTO: X

Basic math errors in Metro fare hike: Surya

BENGALURU, 9 OCT

BJP MP Tejasvi Surya flagged "anomalies" in the Metro fare hike, claiming that the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) had increased the tickets by 105 per cent, as against the 50-55 per cent recommended by the Fare Fixation Committee (FCC).

Surya claimed that there were multiple "basic" mathematical errors in the FCC report released by the BMRCL. The Namma Metro's fares were hiked in February.

"Even High School students do better mathematical calculations than what BMRCL did for fare revision. Have written to the Managing Director of the BMRCL to address and rectify the anomalies in the revised metro fare structure.," Surya wrote on X.

"BMRCL has implemented an illogical fare increase of 105 per cent which is not in consonance with the FFC recommendation too," he said. "The actual fare increase is around 50-55 per cent with correct application of the formula given by FFC itself. In one particular instance, the Maintenance & Administration cost was shown to have increased by a staggering 366 per cent, whereas the actual increase should be 118.5 per cent."

He urged the government to rectify the mistakes. —*Salar News*

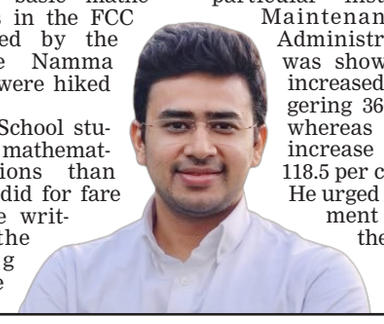


PHOTO: PTI

Cal HC to hear on NIA probe into BJP MP's assault

KOLKATA, 9 OCT

A petition has been filed in the Calcutta High Court seeking a National Investigation Agency (NIA) probe into the assault on BJP MP Khagen Murmu and MLA Sankar Ghosh at Nagrakata, Jalpaiguri, earlier this week. The two leaders were attacked by a mob while visiting the flood- and landslide-affected area following heavy rains in north Bengal, which also hit Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Alipurduar, and Cooch Behar. Justice Kausik Chanda permitted the petition, with the hearing likely to take place on 14 October. Lawyers representing the petitioner have requested that the case should be registered under the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe (SC/ST) Act, as Murmu belongs to the particular community. *—PTI*

Kerala govt forms SIT to probe Sabarimala row

T'PURAM, 9 OCT

The Kerala government on Thursday issued an order constituting a special investigation team (SIT) to probe alleged irregularities related to the reduced weight of the gold-clad copper plates on the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idols at Sabarimala. The SIT was formed in compliance with the Kerala High Court's direction. The team will be headed by H Venkatesh, ADGP (Crime Branch and Law and Order). Meanwhile, three Congress-led UDF MLAs—Roji M John, M Vincent and Saneesh Kumar Joseph, were suspended from the Kerala Assembly following repeated disruptions in the House over the issue. CPI(M) MLA, P P Chitharanjan also sparked outrage after making insensitive remarks regarding differently-abled individuals in the Assembly. *—PTI*

Assamese people betrayed: 17 leaders quit BJP

VISAKHAPATNAM, 9 OCT

YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy visited Narsipatnam Medical College in Anakapalli district on Thursday to oppose the Andhra Pradesh government's plan to develop 10 new government medical colleges under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model, calling it "privatisation." The move, by the TDP-led NDA government, follows the 17 colleges sanctioned by the Centre during the previous YSRCP government, of which only seven were built. Thousands of supporters welcomed Reddy during his road journey from Vizag, and Visakhapatnam Steel Plant employees submitted petitions seeking his intervention to protect the plant, which he pledged to support. TDP leaders accused Reddy of inciting unrest and criticised his stance on medical education. *—PTI*

BSF detains 2 Pakistani nationals in R'than

JAIPUR, 9 OCT

The Border Security Force (BSF) detained two Pakistani nationals, including a seven-year-old boy, near the Sedwa sector of Barmer district, Rajasthan, on Thursday. The duo, identified as 47-year-old Kanji from the Bhil community and the child, were intercepted at Zero Point near the Janpaliya border outpost while allegedly attempting to cross into India through an unfenced area. Preliminary probe suggest both are residents of Hemari village in Pakistan's Tharparkar district and were attempting entry because a relative of Kanji's sister lives in India. After initial questioning, BSF handed them over to local police. Intelligence and security agencies are jointly investigating to determine their motives & verify their backgrounds. *—PTI*

After days of talks, Cong finalises seats

It will announce names shortly as battle for Bihar intensifies; Nominations to be filed soon

PATNA, 9 OCT

The Bihar Congress President Rajesh Kumar on Thursday claimed that the party has finalised the seats it will be contesting in the upcoming assembly polls with consent from "alliance partners".

Kumar said the Congress central election committee has also approved the list of candidates, and a formal announcement will be made soon.

He, however, refused to divulge further details, saying "we are to accommodate some new entrants in the INDIA bloc. The process is in the final stages."

The INDIA bloc in Bihar is helmed by the RJD and includes three Left parties CPI(ML) Liberation, CPI and CPI(M), all of which had contested the last assembly polls together.

Former state minister Mukesh Sahni's Vikassheel Insan Party (VIP), which joined the opposition coalition during last year's Lok Sabha elections, is also part of the bloc, in addition to the Congress.

The alliance is also expected to bring on board Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's JMM and the Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) headed by former Union minister Pashupati Kumar Paras.

Bihar Congress President Rajesh Kumar said the process to include new entrants in INDIA block is at the final stages *PHOTO:ANI*

In the 2020 polls, the Congress had contested 70 of the 243 seats in the state assembly, winning 19 of these. Leaders like AICC Bihar in-charge Krishna Allavaru have been indicating that "sacrifices" may be made this time to accommodate newer allies.

Meanwhile, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh called Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar a "remote-controlled chief minister" and asked why he or the BJP-led Centre did not ensure that the Bihar reservation law was made part of the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

Ramesh also took a dig at Kumar for switching sides frequently, saying "bees saal, char palti (20 years, four U-turns)".

Ramesh said the "double-engine" government does not have fuel. *—PTI*

Jan Suraaj releases 1st list with 51 names

PATNA, 9 OCT

Jan Suraaj Party on Thursday released its first list of 51 candidates for the Bihar assembly elections, but did not confirm whether its founder Prashant Kishor will contest the polls.

Party national president Udai Singh said Kishor is likely to hit the campaign trail on 11 October from Raghopur.

Of the 51 candidates named, 11 belong to backward classes, 17 to extremely backward classes, nine are from minority communities and the rest from the general category.

Prominent names on the list include popular Bhojpuri singer Ritesh Ranjan Pandey from Kargahar, and Pritti Kinnar from the third gender community from Bhorey seat in Gopalganj.

Other candidates include Y V Giri (Manjhi), Dr Amit Kumar Das (Muzaffarpur), Dr Shashi Shekhar Sinha (Gopalganj), Drig Narain Nishad (Valmiki Nagar), Sunil Kumar (Lauriya), Awadhesh Ram (Harsidhi–SC), Dr Lal Bbau Prasad (Dhaka), Usha Kiran (Sursand), Vijay Kumar Sah (Runnisaidpur), Mhd Parvej Alam (Benipatti), Ram Parvesh Kumar Yadav (Nirmali), Raghib Bablu (Sikti), Abu Affan Farooque (Kochadhaman), Afroz Alam and others. *—PTI*

RJD vows govt jobs to all Bihar families

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav on Thursday promised that if the INDIA bloc helmed by his party came to power in Bihar, it would "bring an Act" to ensure every family in the state had a member with a government job. The opposition leader said the proposed Act will be brought "within 20 days of formation of the new government". "The NDA could not provide jobs to the youth in 20 years. We will implementation within 20 months of enacting it", he said. *—PTI*

EC warns parties against misuse of AI videos

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Election Commission has warned political parties against misusing AI tools to create deepfakes or spread misinformation during the Bihar Assembly polls.

It reminded parties to clearly label all AI-generated or digitally altered campaign content as 'AI-Generated,' 'Digitally Enhanced,' or 'Synthetic Content.'

The EC said it is keeping a strict watch on social media posts to ensure free and fair polls.

The advisory, first issued in January, aims to promote transparency in AI use during campaigns. Bihar votes on 6 and 11 November, with counting on 14 November. *— PTI*

RJD MLA Bharat Bind resigns, to join BJP

PATNA, 9 OCT

RJD MLA from Bhabhua constituency, Bharat Bind, on Thursday resigned from the state assembly and the party ahead of the elections. He will contest the coming assembly polls on a BJP ticket. He was elected to the assembly on an RJD ticket. Bind started sitting with treasury bench members after the JD(U) returned to the NDA. Following this, the RJD had demanded his disqualification from the aAssembly. Petition seeking his disqualification is pending before Speaker Nand Kishor Yadav. *—PTI*

SC asks Bihar legal services to assist deleted SIR voters

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court has instructed all legal services authorities in Bihar to provide free legal aid to voters who were excluded from the draft electoral rolls following a special intensive revision (SIR) by the Election Commission.

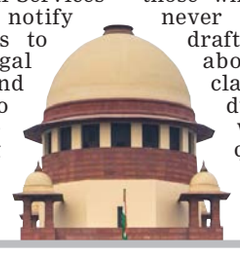
This decision came after Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi requested details of 3.7 lakh voters whose names were removed during the SIR.

The Court urged the Bihar State Legal Services Authority to notify local secretaries to deploy paralegal volunteers and legal counsel to aid these individuals in filing their appeals promptly.

- Moreover, the apex court's ruling extends to those whose names were never included in the draft list.

stated, "Since time to file appeals is running short... we request the Executive Chairman, Bihar SLA, to send communication... to provide services of paralegal volunteers."

Moreover, the apex court's ruling extends to those whose names were never included in the draft list. Concerns about fraudulent claims were raised during the hearing wherein the court questioned the authenticity of details.



The bench *—Agencies*

No rift in NDA over seat-sharing, says Chirag

PATNA, 9 OCT

Union Minister Chirag Paswan on Wednesday dismissed reports of differences within the NDA over seat-sharing for the Bihar Assembly polls, saying talks are progressing smoothly.

"The news about me being upset is false. Seat-sharing in NDA will be finalised soon," the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief told reporters in Khagaria. His party, however, convened a meeting in Patna on Thursday to discuss poll strategy. The elections will be held in two phases on 6 and 11 November, with counting on 14 November.

Meanwhile, HAM Chief Jitan Ram Manjhi demanded at least 15 seats, warning his party might not contest otherwise. *— PTI*

British PM hails Premier League's programme in India

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has lauded the Premier League's long-term commitment to supporting grassroots football in India through a Community Coach Development Programme in Mumbai.

The three-day programme was central to the league's week-long fan and community engagement initiatives in India -- its first major milestone since the opening of its Mumbai office earlier this year.

Delivered in partnership with the British Council, the three-day programme was led by coaches from the Premier League, Brentford and Newcastle United, who provided expert training to 30 community coaches, helping expand access to football across India.

Michael Owen and Britain's Prime Minister Keir Starmer visits a Premier League youth training facility in Mumbai *PHOTO:PTI*

The activity culminated in a showcase event at the Cooperage Football Ground in Mumbai.

The community coaches put the skills they have learned into practice with 80 children from the Oscar Foundation, highlighting how the programme empowers local leaders to inspire the next generation through football.

Among the special guests in attendance were UK PM Starmer and Premier League legend Michael Owen, who interacted with the coaches and the young players. *—PTI*

Telangana HC stays govt order on 42% quota to BCs

HYDERABAD, 9 OCT

The Telangana High Court on Thursday issued an interim order staying a government order providing 42 per cent reservation to the backward classes in local bodies.

With the stay order, the upcoming elections for Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) seats and Panchayats are likely to come to a halt as the poll notification was based on the enhanced quota to BCs.

The court directed the government to file its reply in four weeks.

K Vivek Reddy, senior counsel leading the petitioners, argued that the state government's order exceeds the 50 per cent limit imposed by the Supreme Court for political reservations. There is no exception for backward classes. It also violates the Triple Test laid down by the Supreme court.

With government enhancing the reservations for BCs from 24 per cent to 42 per cent (including 15 per cent to SCs, 10 per cent to STs), the total percentage of reservation rose to 67 per cent.

As per the notification issued by the Telangana State Election Commission, nominations can be filed for the first phase of the MPTC and ZPTC polls from today while polling would be held on 23 October. Counting of votes for all the phases will take place on 11 November.

Notification for the second phase was scheduled to be issued on 13 October and polling would be held on 27 October. *—PTI*

TRUMP AGAIN SAYS HE ENDED INDIA AND PAK WAR

WASHINGTON, 9 OCT

In a recent Fox News interview, US President Donald Trump asserted that he played a pivotal role in reducing tensions between India and Pakistan by threatening to impose substantial tariffs on both nations. Trump claimed, "Tariffs give you a tremendous road to peace and the saving of millions of lives." He recounted informing both countries that US would halt trade and introduce "massive tariffs" unless hostilities ceased. He referenced a specific military conflict, saying, "I said, we're not going to do business with you... within 24 hours, I had a peace deal."

Trump has frequently mentioned having brokered seven peace deals during his presidency, claiming significant diplomatic achievements through trade strategies. *—PTI*

IAF DEBUNKS CLAIMS

Rawalpindi Chicken, Bahawalpur Naan: IAF dinner menu roasts Pak

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla shared an image of a dinner menu at a ceremony of the Indian Air Force (IAF) that featured several dishes named after Pakistani cities that the Indian armed forces targeted during Operation Sindoor as well as Operation Bandar in 2019.

The image of the dinner menu has gone viral on social media as users shared it and praised the IAF for roasting the neighbouring country.

However, top defence sources say that the images cannot be independently verified.

The menu included the dishes like 'Rawalpindi Chicken Tikka Masala', 'Rafiqui Rhara Mutton', 'Bholari Paneer Methi Malai', 'Sukkur Sham Savera Kofta', 'Sargodha Dal Makhani', 'Jacobabad Mewa Pulao' and 'Bahawalpur Naan'.

IAF's dinner menu *PHOTO: X*

The desserts served with main course were 'Balakot Tiramisu', 'Muzaffarabad Kulfi Faluda' and 'Muridke Meetha Pan'.

Sharing the image on X, Poonawalla wrote, "From serving dishes to serving justice. Now even the menu of IAF now conveys a new normal. Gone are the days when 26/11 took place and no action was allowed as per P Chidambaram by foreign powers..."

Titled '93 Years of IAF: Infallible, Impervious and Precise', the dinner menu targeted Pakistan in a light-hearted manner as it mentioned the locations that were targeted during India's recent Operation Sindoor & Balakot airstrike in 2019. *—PTI*

BSP to fight 2027 UP Assembly polls solo: Mayawati

LUCKNOW, 9 OCT

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) Chief Mayawati on Thursday announced her party will contest the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections independently, ruling out any alliances.

Addressing a rally in Lucknow on BSP founder Kanshi Ram's death anniversary, Mayawati said alliances in the past benefited partner parties, not the BSP.

"Our votes get transferred one-sidedly, but others' votes don't come to us. It weakens our movement and mission," she said.

Recalling past elections, she said the BSP fared poorly when in alliance but performed better when contesting alone, winning over 200 seats and forming a majority government in 2007. *— PTI*

Cop alleges caste bias in 'suicide note', names DGP

CHANDIGARH, 9 OCT

The mystery around the suspected suicide of a senior Haryana Police officer has deepened with a note he left behind naming senior officers, and his bureaucrat wife asking for an FIR against the state police chief.

The note left behind by IPS officer **Y Puran Kumar**, who allegedly shot himself dead at his Chandigarh residence, names "senior officers" and details "mental harassment" and humiliation he faced over the past few years.

Kumar was recently posted as the inspector general of the Police Training Centre in Rohtak's Sunaria.

His bureaucrat wife, Amneet P Kumar claimed in a police complaint that her husband's death was the result of "systematic persecution" by high-ranking officers.

In her complaint, she requested an FIR against Shatrujeet Kapur, DGP Haryana, and another senior IPS officer. She allegedly refused to give permission for the post-mortem of her husband's body till justice was delivered.

In her complaint, she said that her husband, who came from the scheduled caste, was harassed over his caste.

Congress MP from Ambala, Varun Chaudhary, termed the suicide "deeply tragic and shocking" and demanded a judicial inquiry to ensure a fair and transparent probe into the incident.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh went to the residence of the officer to offer his family condolences. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Search for missing commandos in J&K enters 3rd day

SRINAGAR, 9 OCT

The search for two missing soldiers in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district entered its third day on Thursday, officials said. Dense vegetation, rough terrain and bad weather have hampered rescue efforts. The commandos, part of an elite Para unit, went missing during a combing operation in the Kokernag area on Tuesday. The operation began in Ahlan Gadole after reports suggested terrorists were hiding there. According to the Army's Chinar Corps, the team encountered a severe snowstorm and whiteout conditions in the Kishtwar range on Monday night, after which the two soldiers lost communication. Helicopters have been deployed, but adverse weather continues to hinder the ongoing search and rescue mission. *—PTI*

Kerala gives free travel to hospitals for cancer patients

T'PURAM, 9 OCT

The Kerala government on Thursday announced a new scheme providing free travel for cancer patients on Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) buses for treatment-related travel to any hospital in the state. State Transport Minister K B Ganesh Kumar made the announcement in the Assembly, saying the scheme covers all services from ordinary to superfast buses. This initiative improves upon the 2012 government order, which allowed a 50 per cent travel concession on KSRTC ordinary and city service buses in the state capital for cancer patients. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan described it as an example of the Kerala development model of welfare that includes everyone and provides relief to such patients. *—PTI*

ISIS module case: ATS searches in Maharashtra

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

The Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) conducted late-night raids across Pune in connection with the suspected radicalisation of individuals linked to an ISIS module registered in 2023. Searches began on the night of 8 October at the homes and offices of 19 suspects, following intelligence inputs about "radicalised people," officials said. Operations were carried out in the Kondhwa, Khadak, Khadki, Wanavadi, and Bhosari areas. Several suspects were being questioned, and verification of their identities was underway, an ATS official confirmed. Heavy police presence was reported in parts of Kondhwa from midnight as security measures were intensified. The scope of the searches may expand based on further findings, officials added. *—PTI*

'Mumbai One' app for public transport tickets goes live

MUMBAI, OCT 9

Mumbai's 'Mumbai One' mobile app became operational on Thursday, a day after being launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Developed by the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA), it allows commuters to book a single QR-based digital ticket valid across Metro, Monorail, buses, and local trains in the city and surrounding areas. The app integrates services of 11 transport operators, including suburban railways, Metro Lines 1, 2A, 3, 7, Navi Mumbai Metro, Monorail, and civic buses. It offers cashless, contactless payments and a multimodal journey planner with real-time updates. Hosted on a MeitY-compliant Google Cloud Platform, the system can handle up to 50 lakh transactions on a daily basis. *—PTI*

SC to hear on Waqf registration deadline

Extension is sought on registration of all properties, including Waqf-by-users on UMEED

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to list an application seeking extension of time for mandatory registration of all Waqf properties, including Waqf-by-users under the UMEED portal.

In an interim order, the top court had put on hold a few key provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025, including a clause that only those practising Islam for the last five years could create Waqf, but refused to stay the entire law outlining the presumption of constitutionality in its favour.

It also held the Centre's order to delete the "Waqf by user" provision in the newly-amended Waqf law was prima facie not arbitrary and the argument that waqf lands would be grabbed by governments held "no water".

Centre on 6 June launched UMEED portal for Waqf properties **PHOTO: PTI**

Waqf by user refers to a practice where a property is recognised as a religious or charitable endowment (Waqf) based on its long-term, uninterrupted use for such purposes, even if there isn't a formal, written declaration of Waqf by the owner.

The counsel for AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi urged the court to extend a miscellaneous application seeking extension of time for registration of waqf properties.

He said that six months time was given in the amended law for registration of the Waqf properties and "Five months went during the judgement, we now only have one month left."

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and said it should be intimated to the Centre.

The Centre had on June 6 launched the Unified Waqf Management, Empowerment, Efficiency and Development Act, 1995 (UMEED) central portal to create a digital inventory after geo-tagging all Waqf properties.

According to the mandate of the UMEED portal, details of all registered Waqf properties across India are to be mandatorily uploaded within six months. *—PTI*

CJI'S ATTACKER NO MORE MEMBER OF BAR ASSOCIATION

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) on Thursday terminated with immediate effect the membership of lawyer Rakesh Kishore, who attempted to hurl a shoe at Chief Justice of India BR Gavai inside the courtroom, finding him guilty of "grave misconduct."

Kishore was heard shouting, "Sanatan ka apman nahi sahenge" (will not tolerate insult to Sanatan Dharma) in the incident.

The Bar Council of India also suspended his licence to practice law. The SCBA termed Kishore's "reprehensible, disorderly and intemperate behaviour" a "direct assault on judicial independence" and "a serious breach of professional ethics, decorum and the dignity of the Supreme Court."

"The Executive Committee is of the considered view that continuation of Kishore as a temporary member of the SCBA would be wholly inconsistent with the dignity and discipline expected of its members," the association said in the resolution. *—PTI*

SC TO HEAR MP MOITRA'S PLEA ON FOREIGN INVESTORS

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court will hear TMC MP Mahua Moitra's plea on 14 October, seeking public disclosure of ultimate beneficial owners and portfolio holdings of AIFs, FPIs, and intermediaries. Advocate Prashant Bhushan said SEBI's reply, citing the PMLA, failed to address the issue. The bench advised amending the petition, but Bhushan maintained it unchanged. The PIL seeks transparency in financial markets. Moitra argued this is vital to prevent misuse of funds. —PTI

CHILDREN MUST HAVE ACCESS TO SEX EDUCATION: SC

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court has ruled that sex education should begin earlier than Class IX, recommending its inclusion in higher secondary curricula to teach adolescents about puberty and related precautions. The bench of Justices Sanjay Kumar and Alok Aradhe pressed for the need to ensure children are informed of these changes. The remarks were made while granting bail to a 15-year-old accused under relevant sections of the IPC and Section 6 of the POCSO Act. —PTI

22 KIDS DEAD

SC to hear on CBI probe into cough syrup deaths

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The Supreme Court will hear on Friday a PIL seeking inquiry and systemic reform in drug safety following child deaths in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan allegedly due to toxic cough syrups.

The court noted petitioner Vishal Tiwari's submission that the plea required urgent hearing. It seeks a court-monitored probe and the constitution of a national judicial commission or expert committee headed by a retired Supreme Court judge. All pending FIRs and investigations across states are requested to be transferred to the CBI for uniform supervision.

The petition comes amid reports from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan where several children allegedly died after consuming certain cough syrups. It urges the central government to identify regulatory failures allowing substandard medicines into the market and to mandate toxicological testing of suspect products through NABL-accredited labs before sale or export.

Meanwhile, two senior drug inspectors were suspended for inaction, and Tamil Nadu Health Minister Ma Subramanian said steps would be taken to permanently shut down the pharma company. The incidents have raised nationwide concern over drug regulation and safety monitoring standards. Parents and authorities are calling for stricter enforcement to prevent further tragedies. *—PTI*

Conversion victims liable if they try to convert others: HC

AHMEDABAD, 9 OCT

The Gujarat High Court has said that persons claiming to be victims of religious conversion can also face legal action if they later attempt to convert others.

On account of their act of "influencing, pressuring and alluring other persons to convert to Islam", a prima facie offence is made out against them, the court said on 1 October, hearing petitions.

Several men accused of religious conversion had approached the HC, contending that they were themselves victims of religious conversion and the First Information Report (FIR) against them was misconceived.

They sought the FIR lodged against them be quashed.

A complainant had alleged that he was converted to Islam by three persons who took his thumb impression for the same, and one of the accused was getting financial aid to carry out the activities.

The three men named as accused had converted around 100 persons from 37 Hindu families to Islam by luring them with money and other temptations, the FIR said.

The High Court said prima facie case was made out against another foreign national accused of funding conversion activities. *—PTI*

2 more held in man's lynching in Raebareli

RAEBARELI, 9 OCT

Two additional suspects have been arrested in connection with the lynching of a 40-year-old Dalit man, Hariom Valmiki, amid accusations of "drone theft." This brings the total number of arrests to 11. The latest arrests involve Shivam Agrahari and Hemant Kumar, both apprehended on Wednesday night.

Valmiki was brutally assaulted by villagers during a night vigil on 2 October in Jamunapur, having been mistaken for a thief amidst unfounded rumours of a gang utilising drones for burglar surveillance. Following the incident, five policemen, including two sub-inspectors, were suspended for negligence.

The Uttar Pradesh government announced that the stringent Gangsters Act and National Security Act (NSA) would be invoked against the accused, warning against any casteist interpretations of the case. The Congress party condemned the incident as a "murder of humanity" and an affront to the Constitution. *—PTI*

Zubeen's cop cousin suspended

GUWAHATI, 9 OCT

Sandipan Garg, cousin of renowned singer Zubeen Garg and DSP in Assam, has been suspended with immediate effect following his arrest in connection with the singer's death in Singapore. An official order confirmed the suspension.

Sandipan was reportedly with Zubeen during his final moments on a yacht before the singer tragically drowned while swimming in Singapore on 19 September. He served as the in-charge of the Boko-Chaygaon police division in Kamrup district.

The chief judicial magistrate of Kamrup Metropolitan district has remanded him to seven days of police custody. The suspension order stated that during this period, his headquarters will be the Assam Police Headquarters in Guwahati, subject to review if deemed necessary. Sandipan faces serious charges under various sections of the BNS, including murder and culpable homicide not amounting to murder. *—PTI*

Darjeeling tea gardens lose Rs 50 cr in floods

KOLKATA, 9 OCT

Flash floods and landslides in Darjeeling have devastated around 30 tea gardens, with planters fearing losses up to Rs 50 crore.

Heavy rains washed away plantations, damaged worker housing, and caused fatalities, affecting at least 50 per cent of gardens. "The autumn production, which accounts for 15 per cent of our annual output, is now in jeopardy," said Ashok Lohia, Chamong Tea chairman.

Over 32 deaths were reported, disrupting logistics and potentially pushing up Darjeeling tea prices.

In Jharkhand, severe monsoon conditions claimed 458 lives this season.

Heavy rains from June to September caused widespread destruction, displacing thousands and damaging homes and crops, particularly in Ranchi and surrounding districts.

According to Ranchi Meteorological Centre Director Abhishek Anand, this year's 1,199.5mm rainfall, the highest in a decade, is largely attributed to climate change. *—PTI*

People amid debris after landslides caused destruction in an area, in Mirik, Darjeeling district **PHOTO: PTI**

Kerala doctors protest attack on colleague

T'PURAM, 9 OCT

Government doctors across Kerala staged protests on Thursday after a colleague was attacked at a government hospital in Kozhikode district.

Vipin, a doctor at Thamarassery Taluk Hospital, was assaulted with a machete by a man grieving his daughter's recent death from amoebic meningitis. The assailant was apprehended, and Vipin sustained head injuries; he is now in stable condition.

In response, doctors boycotted non-essential services statewide, with only emergency departments operating. Kiran, coordinator of the Kerala Government Medical Officers' Association (KGMOA), said, "We are working at the risk of our lives. What was Vipin's fault?" The KGMOA demanded enhanced security, including police outposts at hospitals and ex-servicemen as security staff.

The assailant's wife, Ramnbisa, condemned her husband's actions, urging legal recourse instead. *—PTI*

DAM PROJECT IN LIMBO

Centre says no to MP forest diversion over Project Cheetah

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

- The irrigation scheme is expected to boost agriculture and improve yields in the drought-prone region, the state government claimed. However, the project involves felling over 20,000 trees and submerging nearly 700 hectares of forest.

The Union environment ministry has deferred Madhya Pradesh's proposal seeking diversion of over 740 hectares of reserve forest land in Sheopur district for the construction of a dam and micro irrigation system, citing the need for further study and a no-objection from Project Cheetah.

The proposed project area falls within the landscape of the Kuno National Park, where cheetahs were translocated from Africa in 2022.

The ministry's Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) said the state must obtain comments or a NOC from Project Cheetah under the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) before any clearance is granted.

The FAC examined Madhya Pradesh's request for non-forestry use of 740.159 hectares of reserve forest for the irrigation project on the seasonal Aheli river near Munjari village, Baroda tehsil.

Officials told the committee that the project would help impound water for a longer period, benefitting about 40,000 families in 34 villages.

The irrigation scheme is expected to boost agriculture and improve yields in the drought-prone region. No families will be displaced, the state government claimed.

However, the project involves felling over 20,000 trees and submerging nearly 700 hectares of forest. The total land requirement is about 1,013 hectares, including 273 hectares of non-forest and revenue land.

Given the ecological sensitivity of the region, the FAC called for a detailed assessment of the potential impacts is required.

The committee said the state must conduct a comprehensive study on the river's seasonal water flow, affected villages, the project's benefits, and its downstream impacts before a decision is made.

It also asked to explore the availability of larger compensatory afforestation patches in the adjoining districts. *—PTI*

After 2 years of war & 67K deaths, Gaza awaits peace

After two years of violence and the deaths of 68,000 Palestinians and more than 1,200 Israelis, most of them civilians, it has been reported that Hamas and the Netanyahu government will sign a phase 1 ceasefire agreement. This is the first part of a 20-point plan promoted by the US president, Donald Trump, and supported by the major Arab power brokers in the region.

What we know so far is that Israel will cease it's military assault in Gaza. Hamas, meanwhile, has agreed to free the remaining 20 Israeli hostages still alive in Gaza.

The Conversation's international affairs editor Jonathan Este spoke with Scott Lucas, a Middle East expert at University College Dublin, who addressed several key issues.

Children wave the Palestine flag in Gaza as ceasefire is announced *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

Q: HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT TO PAST AGREEMENTS?

Until we have details, this agreement is similar to the phase 1 60-day ceasefire at the start of 2025. There is a pause in the killing, particularly from the Israeli side, but lasting arrangements remain to be confirmed.

The key difference is that Hamas released only some hostages and bodies in the previous ceasefire. This time they are freeing all hostages and the bodies which can be collected, in return for a still unannounced number of Palestinian detainees released from Israeli prisons.

That gives up Hamas's main leverage against not only Israeli attacks but also the Netanyahu government's occupation and veto on aid to Gaza.

So key elements of a lasting deal – the extent of the Israeli military's withdrawal, the restoration of aid, the establishment of governance and security in the Strip – will rest on guarantees and who provides them.

Q: WHAT ARE THE DEAL'S POSSIBLE STICKING POINTS?

The immediate "sticking points" are whether central provisions will be agreed in further discussions.

The Israelis will demand complete disarmament by Hamas and possibly the expulsion of some of its officials. Hamas is likely to respond with rejection of any forced removals and its retention of "defensive" weapons.

The make-up of the international "board" overseeing the strip is vague beyond Donald Trump declaring himself the chair and no provision for any Palestinian representation. Hamas will probably seek some Palestinian membership.

At this point, the International Stabilization Force for the Strip is a wish rather than a plan. Israeli agreement to a force replacing its military in Gaza is far from assured, especially as it is not clear who will contribute personnel. The Italian foreign minister, Antonio Tajani, has offered to send troops to contribute to the force.

The plan for a day-to-day government to administer the Strip is equally sketchy. While the presence of Palestinian technocrats is mentioned in Trump's "plan", we do not know who these will be.

We know that Hamas is excluded. Israel is also likely to veto the Palestinian Authority in the short-term. And the release from imprisonment of potential Palestinian leaders – such as Marwan Barghouti, who has been held by Israel for more than 20 years – is not confirmed.

Q: HOW MUCH OF THIS IS DUE TO ARAB STATES' PRESSURE?

While many headlines are likely to give the credit to Trump and his envoys, son-in-law Jared Kushner and real estate developer Steve Witkoff, the role of Arab states has been vital.

A month after Israel shattered Qatar's sovereignty with the airstrike trying to assassinate Hamas's negotiators, the Gulf state and Egypt were the brokers of this Phase 1 agreement.

Behind the scenes, other Arab states and Turkey were urging Hamas to accept the Trump "plan" in principle and to reach a deal to release the hostages.

Q: IS THERE A FUTURE FOR PALESTINIANS IN GAZA?

I hope so. The immediate issue is survival. The Israeli attacks have been paused. The urgent issue is getting essential aid into the Strip. Then it is a matter of being able to return to what is left of homes.

The Trump administration has dropped its talk of displacement, stemming the demand of Netanyahu's far-right ministers for the removal of many Gazans.

However, after two years of scorched-earth tactics by Israel, little is left of many of those homes.

The majority of the health sector has been destroyed, as have many schools and other public buildings. Rafah has been razed, and Gaza City's high rises have been blown apart.

Q: DOES TRUMP GET HIS NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOW?

I don't care. Sometimes good things happen from a convergence of cynical and self-serving motives. Trump is desperate for the Nobel Peace Prize because Barack Obama received it in 2009.

Kushner, whose investment fund is bankrolled by Saudi Arabia and Qatar, and Gulf state entrepreneurs see the possibility of large profits.

If that means lives are saved, fine. But those lives need to be saved not just for today or tomorrow.

They need to be respected and supported with a lasting agreement for security and welfare. *—The Conversation*

Viral videos on social media showed people celebrating the announcement of the Israel-Hamas ceasefire deal. Some were seen bowing in gratitude, while others hoisted flags and marched with joy *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

SALAR

World leaders express hope that truce will last

World leaders on Thursday expressed hope for peace and urged Israel and Hamas to fulfil their commitments in the hours after US President Donald Trump announced that the parties had agreed to the "first phase" of a deal signalling a major breakthrough in the two-year war in Gaza.

Hamas will release all 20 living hostages in the coming days in exchange for Palestinian prisoners, while the Israeli military will begin a withdrawal from the majority of Gaza.

"This means that ALL of the Hostages will be released very soon, and Israel will withdraw their Troops to an agreed upon line as the first steps toward a Strong, Durable, and Everlasting Peace," Trump wrote on social media.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on social media: "With God's help we will bring them all home."

Here's how other leaders responded:

TURKEY

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whose country played a role in the negotiations, on Thursday hailed the agreement. In a statement posted on X, Erdogan thanked Trump for "demonstrating the necessary political will" as well as Qatar and Egypt for facilitating the deal.

EGYPT

Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi hailed the deal between Israel and Hamas as a "historic moment."

"This agreement does not only close the chapter of war; it also opens the door of hope for the peoples of the region for a future defined by justice and stability," el-Sissi wrote on social media.

United Nations

CHINA

China hoped for a "lasting and comprehensive" ceasefire in Gaza, with Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun saying that Xi Jinping's government expects the agreement to ease the "humanitarian crisis" in Gaza and calm tensions in the Middle East.

FRANCE

French President Emmanuel Macron said the agreement is a "great hope for the hostages and their families, for the Palestinians in Gaza, and for the entire region."

In a message posted on X, Macron commended "the efforts of President @realDonaldTrump, as well as the Qatari, Egyptian, and Turkish mediators who helped make it happen," and called on the warring parties "to strictly uphold" the terms of the deal.

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi Arabia welcomed the possible start of a ceasefire, with the foreign ministry expressing "its hope that this important step will lead to urgent action to alleviate the humanitarian suffering of the brotherly Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip, a complete Israeli withdrawal, the restoration of security and stability and the initiation of practical steps to achieve a just and comprehensive peace based on the two-state solution and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state on the 1967 borders."

LEBANON

Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun said he hoped the initial agreement would "constitute a first step toward a permanent ceasefire and an end to the humanitarian suffering of the brotherly Palestinian people in Gaza."

Aoun called for "continued international and regional efforts to achieve a comprehensive and just peace in the region that guarantees the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people" and for Israel to "halt its aggressive policies in Palestine, Lebanon, and Syria."

ITALY

Italy's Premier Giorgia Meloni hailed the agreement, calling it "extraordinary news."

"This agreement and the broader path outlined by the Trump plan constitute a unique opportunity to end this conflict that must be seized," Meloni said.

CANADA

"I am relieved that the hostages will soon be reunited with their families," Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney posted on social media.

"After years of intense suffering, peace finally feels attainable," he said. "Canada calls on all parties to swiftly implement all agreed terms and to work towards a just and lasting peace."

ARGENTINA

"I want to take the opportunity to say that I will sign the candidacy of Donald J. Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, in recognition of his extraordinary contribution to international peace," Argentine President Javier Milei posted on X.

AUSTRALIA

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese described the agreement as a "ray of light." The announcement brought "hope that after eight decades of conflict and terror, we can break this cycle of violence and build something better," he said.

"Today the world has cause for real hope," the Australian leader added.

JAPAN

"Japan welcomes that the agreement on the first phase' has been reached among the involved parties," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi told reporters.

"This agreement is an important step toward de-escalating the situation and achieving the two-state solution," he said. *—PTI*

Guo Jiakun | Emmanuel Macron | Friedrich Merz

Joseph Aoun | Giorgia Meloni | Faisal bin Farhan

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Nearly 55,000 children in Gaza may be malnourished: UN study

After two years of war and dire food shortages, more than 54,600 children younger than 5 in Gaza may be acutely malnourished, with more than 12,800 severely affected, according to a new study by a United Nations agency.

By early August, roughly 16 per cent of children ages 6 months to just under 5 years in Gaza were suffering from a life-threatening type of malnutrition known as acute wasting, including nearly 4 per cent with severe wasting, according to the analysis by the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the primary health care provider to Palestinian refugees in the region.

Wasting requires treatment with therapeutic food over several weeks and, sometimes, hospitalisation.

The study, published Wednesday in The Lancet medical journal, is the most comprehensive study of child hunger in the region to date, the authors said. It relied on screenings of nearly 220,000 children from dozens of health centres and medical sites in Gaza between January 2024 and mid-August.

"Tens of thousands of preschool-aged children in the Gaza Strip are now suffering from preventable acute malnutrition and face an increased risk of mortality," said Dr. Masako Horino, the study's lead scientist, in a statement.

In a commentary accompanying the new study, three experts in child health, nutrition and public policy who were not involved in the research called it "some of the most definitive evidence" of the extent of malnourishment.

"It is now well established that the children of Gaza are starving and require immediate and sustained humanitarian assistance," wrote Jessica Fanzo of Columbia University, Paul Wise of Stanford University and Zulfiqar Bhutta of Aga Khan University in Pakistan and the Hospital for Sick Children in Canada.

Food shortages and starvation Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has denied reports of starvation during the war triggered by a deadly Hamas attack on 7 October, 2023, saying they were "lies" promoted by Hamas.

But experts and aid groups have warned for months that Israel's restrictions of food and aid into Gaza and a relentless military offensive were causing starvation, particularly in children and pregnant women.

Gaza's health ministry said 461 people, including 157 children, have died from complications of malnutrition since the war started, most of them in 2025. Hospitals have been overwhelmed with malnourished children, amid a severe shortage of therapeutic foods, according to the ministry. The UN and many independent experts consider figures from the health ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government, to be most reliable.

Gaza's health ministry said 461 people, including 157 children, have died from complications of malnutrition since the war started, most of them in 2025 *PHOTO: PTI*

For the study, trained nurses used calibrated tapes to measure the circumference of children's mid-upper arms, a standard tool for evaluating nutritional stress. Very thin arms, less than 125 millimetres, or 4.9 inches, correlate with very thin bodies, the scientists said.

Restricted aid

Rates of malnutrition decreased during periods when aid was allowed into Gaza, such as a six-week ceasefire in early 2025.

But the children's conditions worsened when supplies were blocked for weeks or months at a time, the study found.

Israel has restricted aid to varying degrees throughout the war, imposing a total siege for weeks starting in March for over two months. In May, it began allowing a trickle of aid. A controversial US-Israel backed supplies distribution system began in May, limiting aid distribution to four sites around Gaza and requiring Palestinians to pass through Israeli military lines to get aid. More than 1,000 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces in and around those sites, according to the UN.

PHOTO: UN

Edesia, a US-based nonprofit food aid organisation, said it was able to send shipments of therapeutic food to Gaza. The group shipped 1,500 boxes of the products on 28 September and plans to send nearly 15,000 boxes by air and sea over the next month, according to founder Navyn Salem.

The study follows an August report by UN-backed food security experts that confirmed famine in parts of Gaza.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, the world's leading authority on food crises, had been warning that hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were facing catastrophic levels of hunger for months. Experts said the lack of data had prevented a declaration of famine earlier.

Two workers involved in the malnutrition screening program were among 21 UN Relief and Works Agency health workers who were killed in Gaza.

Overall, more than 370 agency staff have been killed in the conflict, the group said. *—PTI*

Ceasefire brings muted hope to Gaza

Hamas says aid will start entering Gaza as 5 border crossings reopen between Gaza and Egypt

RAFAH, 9 OCT

Following the ceasefire deal between Israel and Hamas, five border crossings, including the vital Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, are set to reopen.

Egyptian and Hamas officials said the agreement will allow 400 aid trucks into Gaza in the initial days, rising to 600 trucks daily thereafter.

The deal is part of a broader peace plan backed by US President Donald Trump. Under the plan, Israel would retain an indefinite military presence along Gaza's border, while an international security force, largely comprising troops from Arab and Muslim nations, would be deployed within Gaza.

The US is expected to lead a major, globally funded reconstruction effort. The plan also outlines a future role for the Palestinian Authority (PA),

Smoke rises after an Israeli military strike in the Gaza Strip on Thursday after the Israel and Hamas agreed to the first phase of a peace plan **PHOTO: PTI**

- "We have lost so much, loved ones, homes, our lives," said Mohammad Al-Farra, a resident of the besieged Khan Younis. "Even in happiness, we fear what's next." Others said this was the day they were waiting for optimistic about being able to rebuild their home

conditional on sweeping reforms.

While this could take years, the PA's eventual involvement is seen as essential, despite Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's historic opposition.

The plan also remains vague on the issue of Palestinian statehood, which Netanyahu continues to reject.

The war has devastated Gaza. According to Gaza's Health Ministry, over 67,000 Palestinians have been killed and nearly 170,000 wounded since the conflict began in October 2023.

In Khan Younis, reactions were muted.

"We have lost so much, loved ones, homes, our lives," said Mohammad Al-Farra. "Even in happiness, we fear what's next."

In Tel Aviv, hostage families celebrated with champagne and tears. "It's been two years of horror," said Sharon Canot.

US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick shared a video of Trump assuring families: "The hostages are all coming back on Monday."

Palestinians, too, voiced relief.

"This is the day we've waited for," said Alaa Abd Rabbo. Ayman Saber added, "I will rebuild my house. We will rebuild Gaza." —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Macron to name new PM within 48 hours

PARIS, 9 OCT

French President Emmanuel Macron will name a new Prime Minister within 48 hours following Sébastien Lecornu's resignation, his office said Wednesday. Lecornu, 39, resigned Monday after a fragile coalition collapsed, leaving Macron's Centrist bloc without a majority in the National Assembly. He spent two days consulting lawmakers to gauge support for forming a government and passing a 2026 budget. "There's a majority that can govern," Lecornu said, adding that negotiations with most parties, excluding the far Left and Right, had progressed. Macron's minority governments have repeatedly struggled to secure parliamentary backing for unpopular fiscal reforms, causing prior administrations to collapse in rapid succession. —*PTI*

US funds cut make UN slash 25% of peacekeeping force

UNITED NATIONS, 9 OCT

The United Nations will cut 25 per cent of its global peacekeeping force and operations, requiring 13,000 to 14,000 personnel to return home in the coming months, a UN official said Wednesday. The reduction follows US funding cuts. The US, the largest UN donor, will provide USD 680 million in 2026, down from USD 1 billion last year. The UN plans to reduce the peacekeeping budget by 15 per cent of its USD 5.4 billion allocation. Contributions from the US and China account for half of the budget, and China has confirmed it will meet its full commitment by year-end. The reduction will affect nine global missions, including peacekeepers in Lebanon and the Democratic Republic of Congo. —*PTI*

Typhoon Halong batters Japanese islands

TOKYO, 9 OCT

Heavy rains from Typhoon Halong battered Japanese islands south of Tokyo on Thursday, prompting warnings of landslides and floods. Kyodo news agency reported record rainfall in the Izu island chain, 280km south of the capital. Hundreds sought shelter in evacuation centers. One man died after being swept away by waves while fishing in Oiso, Kanagawa prefecture, on Honshu, Japan's main island. Authorities urged residents to remain vigilant and avoid non-essential travel. Emergency services have been deployed to monitor rivers and landslide-prone areas. Meteorologists warned that the storm, moving northeast, could affect parts of the Kanto region later in the day. —*PTI*

Ebola in South Congo shows signs of containment

DAKAR, 9 OCT

An Ebola outbreak in southern Congo is showing signs of containment, the World Health Organisation said Wednesday, reporting no new cases since 1 October. As of 5 October, 64 cases, including 53 confirmed and 11 probable, have been reported in Kasai Province, with 43 deaths. This is the first outbreak in 18 years in the remote region, over 1,000 km from Kinshasa. Improved logistics and field operations, including helicopter and ground deliveries of medical supplies and decontamination of three health facilities, helped reduce transmission. The WHO cautioned that nearly 2,000 contacts are still being monitored, warning that a single missed contact could reignite transmission, especially in areas with high population movement or limited surveillance. —*PTI*

Senate allows Trump to continue using force against 'cartels'

The US has bombed 4 Venezuelan 'cartel' ships, killing at least 21 people **PHOTO: TRUTHSOCIAL**

WASHINGTON/ BOGOTA, 9 OCT

Senate Republicans voted down legislation Wednesday that would have put a check on President Donald Trump's ability to use deadly military force against drug cartels after Democrats tried to counter the administration's extraordinary assertion of presidential war powers to destroy vessels in the Caribbean.

The vote fell mostly along party lines, 48-51, with two Republicans voting in favour and one Democrat voting against.

It was the first vote in Congress on Trump's military campaign, which according to the White House has so far destroyed four allegedly Venezuelan vessels, killed at least 21 people.

The war powers resolution would have required the President to seek authorisation from Congress before further military strikes on the cartels.

The Trump administration has asserted that drug traffickers are armed combatants threatening the US, creating justification to use military force. But that assertion has been met with some unease on Capitol Hill.

The White House had indicated Trump would veto the legislation, even if it was passed.

COLOMBIANS KILLED?

Colombia's President Gustavo Petro said Wednesday there were "signs" that the last small boat attacked by the US military off the coast of Venezuela was carrying Colombian citizens.

"A new front in the war has opened: the Caribbean," Petro wrote on X. "Signs show that the last bombed boat was Colombian with Colombian citizens aboard."

He did explain what those signs were. —*PTI*

Shutdown day 9: No change in Trump's ratings

Trump's approval rating hasn't dropped, despite the US government shutdown continuing into the ninth day. Trump has a net approval of -9.4, with 52.7 per cent disapproving and 43.3 per cent approving, with no substantial change since September. awmakers, however, are becoming increasingly partisan, blaming each other for the filibuster.

YUNUS ALLIES AT CROSSROAD

Safe exit or death: Rift grows in B'desh govt

DHAKA, 9 OCT

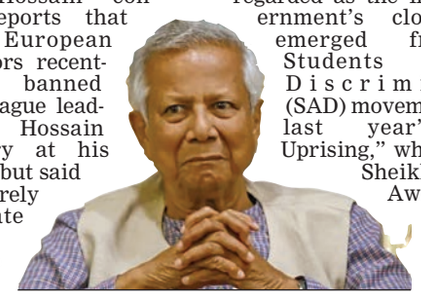
Rumours of a rift within Muhammad Yunus' interim government have intensified after the student-led National Citizen Party (NCP), its key ally, claimed that several advisers were seeking a "safe exit" amid a shifting political climate.

Environment adviser Syeda Rizwana Hasan strongly rejected the claims, saying she was "not seeking any exit at all" and would "spend the rest of my life in Bangladesh." She also demanded an explanation from NCP leaders for their remarks.

Her reaction followed statements by NCP convenor Nahid Islam that advisers were negotiating for a "safe exit" and by coordinator Sarjis Alam, who said, "There is only one place to take a safe exit — and that is death."

Foreign affairs adviser Touhid Hossain confirmed reports that three European ambassadors recently met banned Awami League leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury at his residence, but said it was "merely a private visit."

The NCP, regarded as the interim government's closest ally, emerged from the Students Against Discrimination (SAD) movement that led last year's "July Uprising," which toppled Sheikh Hasina's Awami League regime in August 2024. —*PTI*



Yunus overusing anti-terror law, says HRW

Thousands of people have been arrested under the interim government, many on dubious murder allegations, while scores are being held under the recently amended Anti-Terrorism Act, the Human Rights Watch (HRW) said. Several have alleged mistreatment in custody. "The interim government should not be engaging in the same partisan behaviour (like ousted) Sheikh Hasina," said Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at HRW.

EU Chief survives two more no confidence votes

BRUSSELS, 9 OCT

The European Union's leader comfortably survived two more votes of no confidence on Thursday, as an overwhelming number of EU lawmakers rejected censure motions against her.

In the votes on European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, 378 lawmakers rejected a far-right censure motion, with 179 in favour and 37 abstaining. On a far-left motion, 383 lawmakers voted against, with 133 in support and 78 abstentions.

Von der Leyen has now survived three no confidence votes in a year since beginning her second 5-year term.

The nationalist Patriots for Europe political group insists that migration "has exploded" under von der Leyen's leadership, while the Left group blames her for failing "to act against the Israeli government's systemic violations of international law in Gaza."

But von der Leyen was backed by the big pro-European Centrist groups, which hold the majority in the Assembly during the votes in Strasbourg, France. —*PTI*

CHINA TIGHTENS EXPORTS OF RARE EARTH ELEMENTS OVER SECURITY

KYIV/BELGRADE, 9 OCT

China introduced fresh restrictions on the export of rare earth elements and related technologies, citing national security concerns. The Commerce Ministry stated the curbs aim to prevent the use of Chinese-sourced rare earths in "sensitive fields such as the military". The minerals are critical to a wide range of applications, including jet engines, radar systems, electric vehicles, laptops, and mobile phones.

The move follows claims that unnamed overseas entities had transferred Chinese rare earth materials and technology abroad for military use, causing "significant damage" to China's national security. The new rules are announced ahead of a possible meeting between US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in South Korea. Export permits are now also mandatory for technologies related to rare earth mining, smelting, recycling, and magnet-making. Analysts say rare earths will remain central to US-China trade talks. "Both sides want more stability, but there will be a lot of noise before any final deal," said George Chen of The Asia Group.

In April, China imposed curbs on seven rare earths after Trump's tariffs. —*PTI*

Strikes caused gas shortages in Russia: Zelenskyy

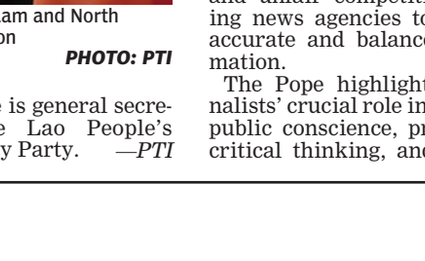
KYIV/BELGRADE, 9 OCT

Strikes on Russian oil facilities by Ukraine's newly developed long-range missiles and drones are causing significant gas shortages in Russia, while on the battlefield a recent Ukrainian counter-offensive has derailed Russia's plans to capture parts of the eastern Donetsk region, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

"The main thing is that (Russia is) now importing gasoline," Zelenskyy said Wednesday. Ukrainian intelligence reports show Russia has boosted imports from Belarus sixfold and removed import duties, while also bringing in fuel from China. "According to our data, they've lost up to 20 per cent of their gasoline supply — precisely after our strikes."

Ukraine's new Palianytsia missile has hit dozens of Russian military depots, Zelenskyy said. The Ruta missile drone, meanwhile, recently struck a Russian offshore oil platform more than 250km away in what Zelenskyy called "a major success" for the new weapon.

Also, swarms of Liutyi and Fire Point long-range drones — up to 300 units in one operation — have hit Russian energy facilities, and Ukrainian forces recently fired Neptune and Flamingo missile systems at Russia, he said.



Russian fuel shortages and higher imports indicate that Ukraine's attacks are working, Zelenskyy said.

This comes as the US is considering selling long-range Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine, which Russia has warned would sour their diplomatic relations.

However, Zelenskyy said that he was still awaiting a confirmation about the missiles.

Zelenskyy also said Ukraine has contingency plans to protect its natural gas infrastructure, which has been the target of heavy Russian attacks in recent weeks as winter approaches.

US SANCTIONS SERBIA'S OIL SUPPLIER

The US has introduced sanctions against Serbia's main oil supplier, which is controlled by Russia.

Serbia almost entirely depends on Russian gas and oil supplies. The gas is then distributed by Petroleum Industry of Serbia (NIS), which is majority-owned by Russia's state oil monopoly Gazprom Neft.

NIS said Thursday it had failed to secure another postponement of the US sanctions, which could jeopardise its efforts to secure oil and gas deliveries in a longer term. —*PTI*

FOREIGN LEADERS INVITED

N Korea's ruling party to turn 80

BEIJING, 9 OCT

North Korea will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the ruling party on Friday and different foreign dignitaries and leaders will be part of the commemoration.

The Workers' Party celebrations will serve to show once again how North Korea is trying to shore up its relations with some key global players and allies, such as China and Russia, who are sending high-level representatives.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has had in China his most important ally, and in recent years he has also built ties with Russia, a country North Korea has helped by sending troops to participate in its war against Ukraine.

In September, Kim Jong Un stood next to Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin as part of a visit to Beijing to attend a massive military parade marking the end of the World War II.

Foreign leaders have started arriving.

China's Premier Li Qiang arrived Thursday in Pyongyan, the highest-level visit by a Chinese leader since 2019.

Russia is sending Dmitry Medvedev, the former Russian president who serves as Deputy Head of the Security Council chaired by President Vladimir Putin, while Vietnam's Communist Party General Secretary To Lam, the country's top leader, arrived Thursday. The President of Laos, Thongloun Sisoulith, will also attend, KCNA said last week. He is general secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. —*PTI*

Vietnamese General Secretary of Communist Party To Lam and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Pyongyang, North Korea on Thursday **PHOTO: PTI**

World needs free and rigourous journalism: Pope

VATICAN CITY, 9 OCT

Pope Leo on Thursday called for free, rigourous, and objective journalism, warning that without it, people cannot distinguish between "fact and fiction" or "true and false," as seen in totalitarian regimes.

Addressing executives of global news agencies at the Vatican, he said, "We are called to defend freedom of the press and guarantee it." He criticised clickbait and unfair competition, urging news agencies to protect accurate and balanced information.

The Pope highlighted journalists' crucial role in forming public conscience, promoting critical thinking, and reporting from conflict zones, praising those who lost their lives in the line of duty in areas such as Gaza and Ukraine.

The Pope also blasted how the wealthy elite live in a "bubble of comfort and luxury" while poor people suffer on the margins.

"When the church kneels beside a leper, a malnourished child or an anonymous dying person, she fulfills her deepest vocation: to love the Lord where he is most disfigured," Leo wrote in a 100-page document titled 'I have loved you', which his predecessor Pope Francis had begun writing.

Leo also credits women's religious orders with carrying out God's mandate for the poor. — *PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Silver surges to fresh record of Rs 1.63 lakh/kg

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Silver prices surged by Rs 6,000 to hit a fresh record of Rs 1,63,000 per kg in the national capital on Thursday as the white metal touched the USD 50 per ounce level for the first time in the overseas markets. Silver saw such a steep surge for the second time in a week. It climbed Rs 7,400 to close at Rs 1,57,400 per kg on 6 October. In the local bullion market, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity stayed unchanged at their all-time high levels of Rs 1,26,600 per 10g and Rs 1,26,000 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes), respectively, on Thursday. Globally, spot gold was trading marginally lower at USD 4,039.26 per ounce. Silver rose more than 2 per cent to breach the crucial $50 per ounce mark in the spot markets for the first time. *—PTI*

Rupee falls by 4P, closes at 88.79 against USD

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

The rupee traded with a slight negative bias and hovered near its all-time low levels before settling for the day at 88.79 against the US dollar, lower by 4 paise on Thursday, as strong greenback demand and ongoing trade tensions between India and the US weighed on investor sentiments. Forex traders said the USD/INR pair is trading in a tight range as absence of economic data from US amid the government shutdown may also lead to consolidation. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.76 against the greenback and fell to an intraday low of 88.79 and a high of 88.74. It finally closed the day at 88.79 (provisional) against the greenback, registering a decline of 4 paise over its previous close. *—PTI*

Panacea to supply vaccines worth ₹127 cr to CMSS

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Panacea Biotec Ltd on Thursday announced that it will supply bivalent oral polio vaccines valued at Rs 127.2 crore to the Central Medical Services Society (CMSS), operating under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. In a regulatory filing, Panacea Biotec stated that the CMSS has accepted the company's proposal for the supply of the bivalent oral polio vaccine, following the tender issued by the authority. The acceptance was confirmed through a Letter of Acceptance (LOA) dated 8 October 2025. "As per the LOA, the company will supply vaccines worth Rs 127.2 crore in multiple tranches over a period ranging from 90 to 480 days from the date of issuance of the LOA," the firm said. *—PTI*

Akasa Air's booking systems face outage

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Akasa Air on Thursday faced issues with its check-in and booking systems due to an outage at the airline's service provider's facility. "Our systems are currently experiencing intermittent issues and some of our online services on our website, including booking, check-in and manage booking services, may be temporarily unavailable. Passengers with immediate travel plans can use our Mobile App for check-in or reach the airport early to check-in at our counters," the carrier said in an update on its website. The airline operates around 1,000 flights a week. Additionally, Akasa Air's co-founder and Senior Vice President for international operations Neelu Khatri has resigned, citing the pursuit of a new direction in her professional journey. Specific details were not disclosed. *—PTI*

PM invites global firms to join in India's growth story

India-UK trade pact to boost MSMEs and create stability

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI
LONDON, 9 OCT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday invited global businesses to participate in India's growth story, which is the fastest-growing large economy in the world.

Addressing Global Fintech Fest 2025 here, Modi emphasised that technology is not just a matter of convenience, but a means of equality.

India's fintech prowess is getting global recognition, he said, adding India is not only sharing technology with other countries but also helping them develop it.

"I invite all (countries), including the UK, to forge partnerships with India. All global investors are welcome to participate in India's growth story.

Modi also said the India-UK free trade pact will boost MSMEs and create jobs, and exuded confidence that the target of doubling bilateral trade will be achieved ahead of the target date of 2030.

Addressing a CEO forum along with British Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Modi said the Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA) between India and the UK will provide stability at a time when the world is witnessing instability.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Prime Minister Narendra Modi attend the India-UK CEO Forum at Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai on Thursday
PHOTO: PTI

UK-INDIA INNOVATION

The Imperial College, London, has partnered with Science Gallery Bengaluru (SGB) to co-develop open research facilities, boost UK-India and global talent exchange through a joint fellowship, Imperial President Hugh Brady announced on Thursday.

According to Brady, the partnership also aims to explore public engagement along with research and education.

Additionally, UK is set to become the country with the biggest higher education footprint in India with the confirmation of nine new British university campuses.

Starmer announced the University of Lancaster and University of Surrey as the latest to get approval to open new campuses after the University of Southampton.

The University of York, University of Aberdeen, University of Bristol, University of Liverpool, Queen's University Belfast and the University of Coventry are next in line to set up Indian campuses.

INDIGO TO INCREASE FLIGHTS TO MANCHESTER

IndiGo will start operating additional services to the UK, with more frequencies to Manchester. *—PTI*

2,099 STOCKS ADVANCE

Markets rebound amid buying in Reliance, IT firms

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

PHOTO: PTI

Stock markets rebounded on Thursday with the benchmark Sensex climbing 398 points following buying in IT firms and blue-chip Reliance Industries amid foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 398.44 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at 82,172.10. During the day, it jumped 474.07 points or 0.57 per cent to 82,247.73.

The 50-share NSE Nifty jumped by 135.65 points or 0.54 per cent to 25,181.80.

IT shares such as HCL Tech, TCS, Infosys, and Tech Mahindra gained ahead of the quarterly earnings. IT bellwether TCS, after market hours, reported a 1.39 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 12,075 crore and a 2.39 per cent rise in revenues to Rs 65,799 crore for the second quarter of FY25.

Among Sensex firms, Tata Steel rose the most by 2.65 per cent after the company reported a 7 per cent rise in domestic crude steel production. HCL Tech, UltraTech Cement, Bharat Electronics, Sun Pharma and Tata Consultancy Services were the major gainers.

Infosys rose nearly 1 per cent while Reliance Industries advanced 0.78 per cent, supporting the recovery in key indices from the previous day's losses.

However, Axis Bank, Titan, Maruti and Tata Motors were among the laggards.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 0.75 per cent and the smallcap index climbed 0.18 per cent.

All sectoral indices ended higher.

As many as 2,099 stocks advanced while 2,080 declined and 171 remained unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

'India won't bow to global trade pressure'

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Agriculture Minister **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** has asserted that India will not compromise its national interest amid global economic tensions where "trade and tariffs have become weapons." Speaking at the 120th Annual General Meeting of the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's clear directive is that while India acts as a "global brother", the nation's own interests remain paramount.

"In today's volatile geopolitical situation, where nations are fighting and tariffs are used as weapons, India must choose its own path. We will not come under anyone's pressure," Chouhan declared, calling protection of national interests vital for global peace.

Highlighting that 46 per cent of India's population depends directly on agriculture, he said strengthening the sector is essential to ensure food security and farmer welfare. "One cannot rely on the global market for food. We must become self-reliant," he emphasised.

Recalling the nation's past dependence on foreign food aid, Chouhan contrasted it with today's situation, where 80 crore people receive free rations and granaries are full. However, he urged further action to secure food supply and farmers' income.

He said the government is focusing on six key areas, with productivity as the main goal. While India matches global averages in rice and wheat, it lags in pulses and oilseeds. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research is using genome editing to improve seed quality. *—PTI*

RS 11,607 CR IPO

LG's IPO receives 54 times subscription on final day

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The initial public offering of LG Electronics India Ltd received 54.02 times subscription on the final day of bidding on Thursday, driven by overwhelming participation from institutional buyers.

The Rs 11,607 crore IPO received bids for 3,85,33,26,672 shares against 7,13,34,320 shares on offer, according to NSE data.

The portion for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) got subscribed a huge 166.51 times, while the non-institutional investors quota received 22.44 times subscription. The category for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) attracted 3.54 times subscription.

LG Electronics India Ltd on Monday collected Rs 3,475 crore from anchor investors.

The Initial Public Offer (IPO) has a price band of Rs 1,080 to Rs 1,140 per share, valuing the company around Rs 77,400 crore at the upper end.

This is the second South Korean company to tap the Indian stock market, following the listing of Hyundai Motors India Ltd in October last year.

However, a report by proxy advisory firm Ingovern has raised alarms regarding the company's contingent liabilities, which total Rs 4,717 crore—equivalent to 73 per cent of its net worth—primarily associated with disputed tax claims.

Investors have been cautioned about the potential impact of these liabilities on future earnings and the company's reliance on royalty payments to its parent, which could further pressure margins without minority shareholder oversight.

Despite these concerns, Ingovern acknowledged the IPO as an opportunity to engage in a well-established consumer durable business with a strong distribution network.

The market debut is anticipated on 14 October. *—PTI*

LG India profit soars by 46% to ₹2,203 crore

LG Electronics India reported a 45.8 per cent rise in profit to Rs 2,203.35 crore for FY25, with revenue from operations increasing 14.1 per cent to Rs 24,366.64 crore, according to regulatory filings. The growth comes as the company prepares for its Initial Public Offering, with South Korea's LG Electronics set to sell a 15 per cent stake. The refrigerator segment led revenue, contributing 27.48 per cent of total turnover. Total expenses rose to 11 per cent. *—PTI*

DGCA slaps ₹20L fine on IndiGo

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

The aviation regulator DGCA has imposed a penalty of Rs 20 lakh on IndiGo for certain alleged lapses in pilot training, and the airline plans to challenge the decision.

IndiGo received the communication from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) regarding the penalty on 26 September, according to a regulatory filing by the airline made on Wednesday.

The Rs 20 lakh fine has been imposed for "alleged failure to use qualified simulators for pilot training at Category C Aerodromes," the filing said.

Generally, Category C airports have challenging approach and operational conditions.

The airline said it is in the process of contesting this order before the appropriate appellate authority.

"The delay in disclosure was unintentional and was caused due to a delay in internal communication of details pertaining to the order," IndiGo said.

The airline also said there is no material impact on its financials, operations, or other activities due to the DGCA order.

Shares of the carrier were trading 1.78 per cent higher at Rs 5,730.60 in afternoon trade on BSE on Thursday. *—PTI*

Bombay HC block taxis from using 'Jio' trademark

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

The Bombay High Court has issued an interim order preventing a taxi services company from using the 'Jio' trademark, owned by Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), for its offerings linked to the domain www.jiocabs.com.

The bench, comprising Justices Somasekhar Sundaresan, granted the injunction on Tuesday, stating that RIL had established a strong prima facie case against the defendant. The court expressed concern that the continued unauthorised use of the well-known brand could inflict "serious harm to its goodwill," noting that such usage would indeed cause "grave injury" to its rightful owner.

The ruling followed a legal complaint from RIL, asserting its status as the registered proprietor of the 'Jio' trademark. The firm argued that the name 'Jiocabs' and the associated domain constituted trademark infringement and passing off. The court highlighted that after receiving a legal notice from RIL, the defendant firm changed its operational name, but the domain www.jiocabs.com remained active.

Consequently, the interim injunction was deemed necessary to prevent further infringement of RIL's trademarks and copyrighted material. *—PTI*

TCS Q2 net profit up by 1.4%

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

India's largest IT services firm Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) on Thursday reported a 1.39 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 12,075 crore in the July-September quarter of this financial year.

It had posted a profit of Rs 11,909 crore in the corresponding quarter of FY25.

Revenues from operations for Q2 FY26 rose 2.39 per cent to Rs 65,799 crore, up from Rs 64,259 crore in Q2 FY25, according to a regulatory filing by TCS, which kicked off the Q2 earnings season for tech firms.

Seen sequentially, profit declined by 5.3 per cent, while revenue increased by 3.7 per cent.

TCS declared a second interim dividend of Rs 11 per equity share of Re 1 each of the company.

Shares of TCS settled at Rs 3,061.95 apiece on the BSE on Thursday, 1.16 per cent higher than the previous close. The financial results were announced post-market hours on Thursday. *—PTI*

Discord reports potential leak of 70,000 users' ID photos

SAN FRANCISCO, 9 OCT

Discord has revealed that official ID photos of approximately 70,000 users may have been compromised following a cyber-attack targeting a third-party firm that assists in user age verification.

The platform, which boasts over 200 million users globally, confirmed that its own systems were not breached.

The leaked information could include personal details, partial credit card information, and messages exchanged with Discord's customer support, although no full credit card numbers, passwords, or other unrelated messages were exposed. Discord stated that it is collaborating with law enforcement on the probe.

The firm has revoked access to the affected customer support provider but did not disclose its identity. *—Agencies*

BATTLE OVER UNPAID WAGES

Musk settles $128M lawsuit with twitter's ex-CEO over severance

SAN FRANCISCO, 9 OCT

X Chairman, **Elon Musk** and former X CEO **Parag Agrawal** have come to a settlement over the former executives' $128 million severance pay dispute, said sources.

According to the source, the lawsuit filed by Agrawal, former chief financial officer, Ned Segal; former chief legal officer Vijaya Gadde; and former general counsel Sean Edgett, claimed that Musk did not pay the promised $128 million severance pay to the four executives after his takeover of the company.

The filing on the settlement in the San Francisco court last week did not disclose the terms, it said.

The filing stated, "The parties have reached a settlement and the settlement requires certain conditions to be met in the near term."

The case followed Musk's acquisition of the company in a $44 billion deal in 2022, after which he falsely accused the four executives of misconduct when they filed a lawsuit against him for backing out of the deal, according to sources.

The complaint cited by CNN stated, "He claimed in his termination letters that each Plaintiff committed 'gross negligence' and 'wilful misconduct' without citing a single fact in support of this claim." According to the executives, Musk owed each of them one year's salary and stocks worth hundreds of thousands of dollars.

This case is one among the many legal cases that the Tesla CEO has faced after his acquisition of X, firing over half of its employees and renaming it, said sources. *—Agencies*

'SATCOM ROLLOUT AFTER TRIA FINALISES PRICES'

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Satellite broadband services in India are set to commence once companies finalise their rollout strategies and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) determines spectrum prices, Union Telecom Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia stated on Thursday.

At the India Mobile Congress 2025, he confirmed that two companies have been granted licences for satellite communications services, while another has received a Letter of Intent. "It depends on the players in terms of how quickly they can roll out their execution strategy. There is one issue that Trai has to still finalise the spectrum pricing. That is the pending part, and that regulator will do," he said.

Public interest in the Satcom rollout has surged, with companies such as Elon Musk-owned Starlink, Bharti-backed Eutelsat OneWeb, and Reliance Jio-SES vying for a stake in the burgeoning broadband market. The government has issued permits to Eutelsat OneWeb and Jio-SES, & a LoI to Starlink. He also dismissed suggestions of increased government stakes in the troubled Vodafone Idea. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Richa becomes fastest Indian batter to score 1000 runs

VISAKHAPATNAM, 9 OCT

Richa Ghosh became the latest Indian batter to aggregate 1000 runs in Women's ODIs during the Women's ODI World Cup 2025 encounter against South Africa in Visakhapatnam on Thursday. The Bengal batter is the 12th Indian to cross the four-figure mark in the 50-over format. She is the third fastest batter overall to the landmark in terms of balls faced (1010), only behind Australia's Ashleigh Gardner (917) and England's Nat Sciver-Brunt (943). Richa got to the landmark in just 46 matches with an average just shy of 30 and a strike rate close to 100. The wicketkeeper-batter scored a fifty against the Proteas to resurrect India's innings after six wickets for 47 runs had undone the positive 50-run opening partnership.—*PTI*

Asia Rugby: Shikha Yadav to lead India Women in Leg 2

MUMBAI, 9 OCT

Shikha Yadav will lead India in Leg 2 of the Asia Rugby Emirates Sevens Series to be held in Colombo on 18 and 19 October. The Indian squad, which had made its debut in Hangzhou, finishing sixth, was announced by the Indian Rugby Football Union (IRFU) here on Thursday. Having entered Leg 1 of the competition as the 10th seed, India had finished among the top six and headed to Leg 2 with their confidence bolstered by the previous show. India had beaten the Philippines (24-5) and the UAE (19-12) in Leg 1. "The Asia Rugby Emirates Sevens Series features Asia's 12 top national teams.—*PTI*

Vani takes one-shot lead at Women's Indian Open

GURUGRAM, 9 OCT

Vani Kapoor got off to her best-ever start in the Hero Women's Indian Open as she put together a superb 5-under 67, giving her a one-shot lead after the first round here on Thursday. With as many as four Indians in the top-10, it was a happy hunting day for the home contingent.Showing great familiarity at the DLF Golf and Country Club, her home course, Vani had six birdies against one bogey through her round. Her gains included a hat-trick of birdies on the back nine from the 11th to the 13th as she kept her nerves intact in the closing stages.Vani's best finish at the event has been a tied-sixth back in 2017.Diksha, had a rough day with a card of 6-over 78 and is in danger of missing the cut at T-82.—*PTI*

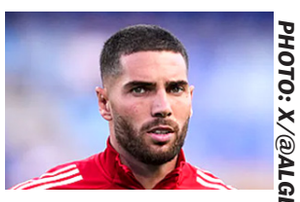


PHOTO: X/@ALGERIA

Zidane's son Luca 'proud' to play for Algeria

PARIS, 9 OCT

French football legend Zinedine Zidane's son, Luca, said on Wednesday he is "proud" to represent Algeria ahead of the North African country's World Cup qualifier against Somalia.Luca Zidane, 27, turned out for France's youth team but has chosen to play for Algeria, where his grandparents were born."I'm very happy to be here. It makes me proud and I will give everything at 100 per cent to make the Algerian people proud," the goalkeeper told a press conference in Oran.Zidane junior, who plays for Spanish second-tier side Granada, changed sporting nationality last month, having never represented France at the senior level.—*PTI*

India eye early finish against struggling WI

Surface at the Feroz Shah Kotla promises another quick finish

India's Ravindra Jadeja during a practice session on the eve of the second test cricket match of the series between India and West Indies, in New Delhi on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

India vs West Indies Match starts at **9.30 am IST**

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Assessing Sai Sudharsan's temperament and Nitish Kumar Reddy's utility in home conditions would be topmost on India's checklist when the high-on-confidence hosts take on a floundering West Indies team in the second and final Test, starting here on Friday.

India's fine ensemble of individually gifted cricketers, each capable of walking into any top side internationally, will be pitted against a West Indies outfit that looks a pale shadow of its glorious past and is struggling to stay relevant in the traditional format. It's a team that now comprises largely reluctant players who might not even find takers in the ever-expanding global T20 freelance circuit.

India's T20 captain Suryakumar Yadav on Thursday said overcoming the fear of failure in knockout games has been a key contributor to the national team's stellar success over the past 15 months.For India, another dominating performance isn't just about wrapping up the series, but also about firming their grip on the World Test Championship points table and carrying a surge of confidence into the far sterner challenge that awaits against South Africa at home later this year. The surface at the Feroz Shah Kotla promises another quick finish. Assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate noted a "dry patch" that he felt could be helpful for seamers. —*PTI*

Want to imbibe Rohit bhai's calmness: Gill

India's newly-appointed ODI captain Shubman Gill on Thursday said he would look to imbibe the "calmness" that his predecessor Rohit Sharma brought to the dressing room when he takes charge of the format starting with the tour of Australia later this month. "The calmness of Rohit bhai and the friendships that he created among the group, I want to imbibe that," Gill said when asked about his expanded role ahead of the second Test against the West Indies.

WOMEN'S WORLD ODI CUP

B'desh spinners ready to test out-of-form NZ

GUWAHATI, 9 OCT

Former champions New Zealand will have their backs to the wall when they take on a confident and spin-heavy Bangladesh in a crucial ICC Women's World ODI Cup group match at the ACA Barsapara Stadium, here on Friday.

While New Zealand are yet to open their account after two successive defeats, Bangladesh will eye a second win from three matches that would consolidate their position in the top four.

The White Ferns, who were champions in 2000, are staring at an early exit if there is a third straight loss.

Bangladesh's well-rounded spin attack has been their biggest weapon so far, and on the slow and dry Guwahati surface has offered turn as the game progresses.

They would look to bounce back from their defeat against England here.

Their spin quartet, led by vice-captain and left-arm orthodox Nahida Akter, has tormented batters with variety and control.

Nahida, now Bangladesh's leading wicket-taker across formats, will once again be central to their plans against a New Zealand batting unit that has faltered against spin.

Bangladesh vs New Zealand Match starts at **3.00 pm IST**

Supporting her will be leg-break bowlers Fahima Khatun and Rabeya Khan, who also chipped in with useful runs down the order against England, while 18-year-old leg-spinner Shorna Akter has been a revelation, returning sensational figures of 3/5 from 3.3 overs in their thumping win over Pakistan. At the top, pacer Marufa Akter, who impressed with 2/31 against Pakistan, is expected to make use of the new ball and generate early swing. Her ability to generate a sharp pace could test the struggling New Zealand openers, who have failed to open their account together. Veteran Suzie Bates has endured successive ducks. —*PTI*

Djokovic beats Bergs to set up semifinal with Vacherot

SHANGHAI, 9 OCT

Vacherot *PHOTO: X/@ SHANGHAI*

Novak Djokovic overcame a slow start to stun Holger Rune 2-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

"Maybe at times (I was) a little too passive, but Zizou is a great player, a very talented player, he has some great shots," Djokovic said. Djokovic broke in the sixth game after an unforced error from the 44th-ranked Bergs.But just days after he overcame exhaustion, vomiting, and an injury scare in his last match against Spain's Jaume Munar, he looked tired and overheated. —*PTI*

Novak Djokovic *PHOTO: X/@ SHANGHAI*

Novak Djokovic looked far from his best on Thursday but dispatched Belgium's Zizou Bergs 6-3, 7-5 to set up a Shanghai Masters semifinal against tournament surprise package Valentin Vacherot. The 38-year-old Serbian, the highest-ranking player left standing, is getting ever closer to a fifth title in the Chinese financial hub despite struggling physically throughout the week.

Next in the crosshairs of the 24-time Grand Slam champion is world number 204 Vacherot, a qualifier from Monaco who battled back from a set down to

WORLD JUNIOR MIXED TEAM C'SHIPS

India assured of historic medal

GUWAHATI, 9 OCT

India beat Korea to reach the semifinals and assure themselves of a maiden medal at the World Junior Mixed Team Badminton Championships here on Thursday.

The hosts won 44-45, 45-30, 45-33 in a nerve-wracking quarterfinal clash that lasted almost three hours as the semi-final appearance assured India of their first-ever mixed-team medal in the history of the BWF World Junior Championships.

The Indian shuttlers will face the Asian U-19 mixed team champions, Indonesia, in the semifinals.

Indonesia defeated Chinese Taipei 45-35, 45-35 in another quarterfinal match at the National Center of Excellence here.

The way India had lined up for the quarterfinals, it was quite clear that they were heavily relying on their singles players to bail them out in case the Koreans made the most of their doubles strength.

The first set proceeded accordingly, as Bhargav Ram Arigela and Viswa Tej Gobburu lost 5-9 in the first boys' doubles match against Cho Hyeong Woo and Lee Hyeong Woo. The Indian girls' doubles combination of Vennala K and Reshika U managed to reduce the deficit by one point by beating Cheon Hye In and Moon In Seo 10-9, before Rounak Chouhan brought them within one point by defeating Choi Ah Seung 11-9.

However, a 4-9 loss for C Lalramsanga and Aanya Bisht in the mixed doubles against Lee and Cheon meant that Unnati Hooda had to win 15 points before her opponent, Kim Han Bi, could reach nine.

Unnati began strongly by taking a 3-0 lead, but Kim managed to draw level at 6-6. It looked like the set was slipping from India's hand. But Unnati dug deep and played long rallies to win five straight points to build pressure on her opponent, and went on to draw level at 44-44. —*PTI*

India's players celebrate after beating Korea in the quarter-final team events at the BWF World Junior Badminton C'ships on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

INDIA DRAW 1-1 AGAINST SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE, 9 OCT

A 10-man India capitalised on a defensive blunder from Singapore at the fag end of play to escape with a 1-1 draw and keep their Asian Cup football qualification hopes afloat on Thursday.

India conceded a goal scored by Ikhsan Fandi in the first minute of the first half's stoppage time to find themselves on the back foot in the Group C match. But Rahim Ali equalized in the 90th minute after Singapore's Jordan Emaviwe gifted a goal by committing a horrible blunder. Khalid Jamil's team, which arrived here with just around a week of training together, played the whole of the second half with 10 men as key defender Sandesh Jhingan was sent off after receiving his second yellow card in the 47th minute. —*PTI*

Rahim Ali *PHOTO: PTI*

India loses to China in water polo QF

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

For India, Dhruthi Karthikeya led the scoring with three goals *PHOTO: PTI*

The Indian women's team went down to China in the quarterfinal of the 11th Asian Aquatics Championships, held at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex on Thursday.

China began the game on the front foot, racing to a formidable lead within the first quarter and went on to secure a convincing 34-6 win.

Li Peiyang, Li Linyun, and Li Jianyu each scored seven goals, showing consistent finishing throughout the match.

Han Wen followed with six goals, while Wang Xin added three. Shi Jingjiarong contributed two goals, and both Wang Xuan and Liu Yan scored one goal each. For India, Dhruthi Karthikeya led the scoring with three goals. Captain Varsha Suresh, Safwa Sakeer, and Krisha Purokayasta added one goal each for the team. In another women's quarterfinal clash, Japan defeated Hong Kong 20-16 in a high-scoring match. Shibata Kanade led Japan with five goals, while Captain Fukuda Shoka and Eguchi Seira added four goals each. Sanda Yumeka scored three, Kobayashi Maho contributed two, and both Yamada Karin and Shieonoshita Kaho each scored 1 goal. —*PTI*

Top performers will be considered for South Asian Sr Championships: AFI

BHUBANESWAR, 9 OCT

Top performers during the five-day National Junior Athletics Championships starting here on Friday will be considered for the South Asian Senior Championships in Ranchi next month, the Athletics Federation of India said on Thursday. "The South Asian Senior Athletics Championships will act as an excellent exposure on the home soil for promising junior athletes," Athletics Federation of India (AFI) spokesperson Adille Sumariwalla said during a press conference here. As many as 14 finals are scheduled for the opening day on Friday. The women's 5,000m track race in the under-20 will be the first medal event of the day.

"In addition to senior athletes, the AFI selection panel will consider youngsters in the national team (for the South Asian meet)." The South Asian Senior Championships will be held at Ranchi's Birsa Munda Stadium from November 24 to 26 under the aegis of the South Asian Athletics Federation (SAAF). According to Sumariwalla, a former AFI president, more than 2000 athletes, including 950 female competitors, will feature in various age groups during the five-day event here. The junior competition is being conducted in association with the Government of Odisha and will also act as a platform to scout talent.

"AFI's talent identification team will be present throughout the duration of the competition to scout athletes having potential to excel at a global level in the future," Sumariwalla said. —*PTI*

PERSONAL DECISION

No one forced me to retire: R Ashwin

NEW DELHI, 9 OCT

Former India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has clarified on Thursday that his decision to retire from the game was a personal call and "no one forced" him to call it quits midway through the Test tour of Australia last year.

Ashwin, 39, stunned the cricket fraternity by announcing his retirement after the third Test of the 2024-25 Border-Gavaskar Trophy in Brisbane last year. Subsequently, he also announced his retirement from the Indian Premier League (IPL) in August this year. "No one told me that you should go, no one told me that there is no place for you in the team. Actually, before I made the decision, 2-3 people told me not to take it, but I made my decision. In fact, they wanted me to play more," Ashwin said on his YouTube channel.

Ravichandran Ashwin *PHOTO: PTI*

"Rohit Sharma (the then captain) also told me to think about it, Gauti bhai (Gautam Gambhir) also told me to think again. But I didn't talk much about it (retirement) with Ajit Agarkar (chairman of selectors). "The decision is very personal when it comes to retirement. These are all very individual decisions," he added.

Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are expected to feature in at least three, if not four, Vijay Hazare Trophy games before the New Zealand ODI series in January, provided they are still aiming to play the 2027 World Cup . "If not this series, then they have to play the Vijay Hazare Trophy, because that will let us know the kind of form you are in," Ashwin said. —*PTI*

Man Utd wins on women's Champions League debut

MANCHESTER, 9 OCT

Manchester United's women beat Valerenga 1-0 to mark their debut in the Champions League, while Chelsea could only manage a 1-1 draw away to FC Twente on Wednesday.

United has long since played catch-up with Europe's other top clubs after only forming its women's side in 2018.

The Red Devils delivered on a historic night for the club thanks to Maya Le Tissier's first-half penalty.

English champion Chelsea's latest quest to conquer Europe got off to a poor start as it failed to capitalize on a dominant display in the Netherlands.

Despite winning the Women's Super League for the past six seasons, the Blues have failed to ever win the Champions League.

Twente took the lead just after the hour mark when Danique Van Ginkel sent a curling drive around Mille Bright and into Livia Peng's top corner. —*PTI*